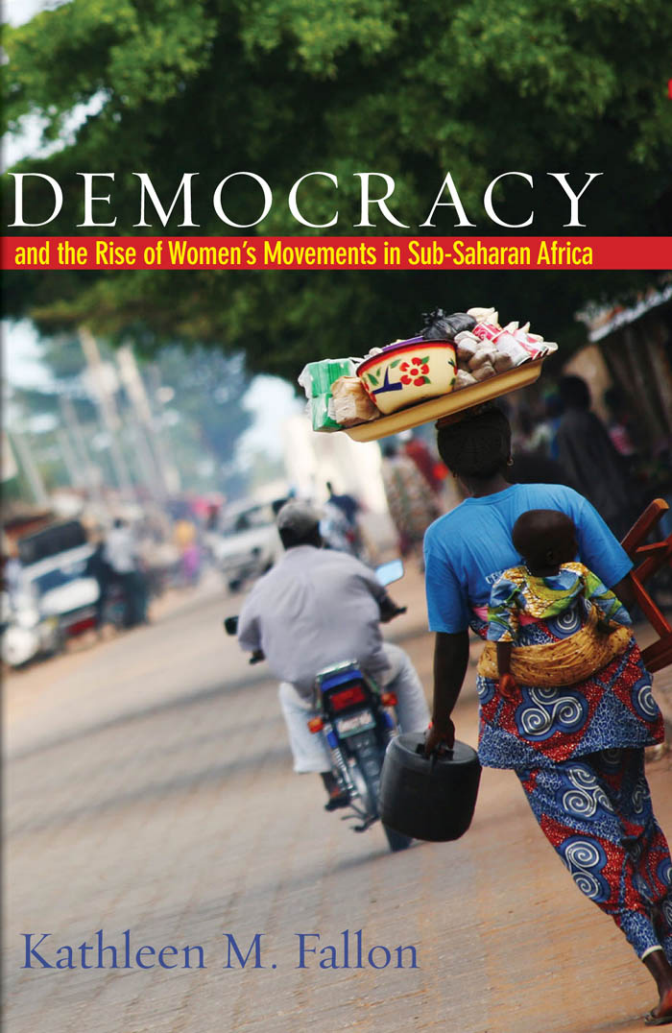
DEMOCRACY

and the Rise of Women's Movements in Sub-Saharan Africa



Kathleen M. Fallon

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Democracy and the Rise of Women's Movements in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Democracy and the Rise of Women's Movements in Sub-Saharan Africa

KATHLEEN M. FALLON

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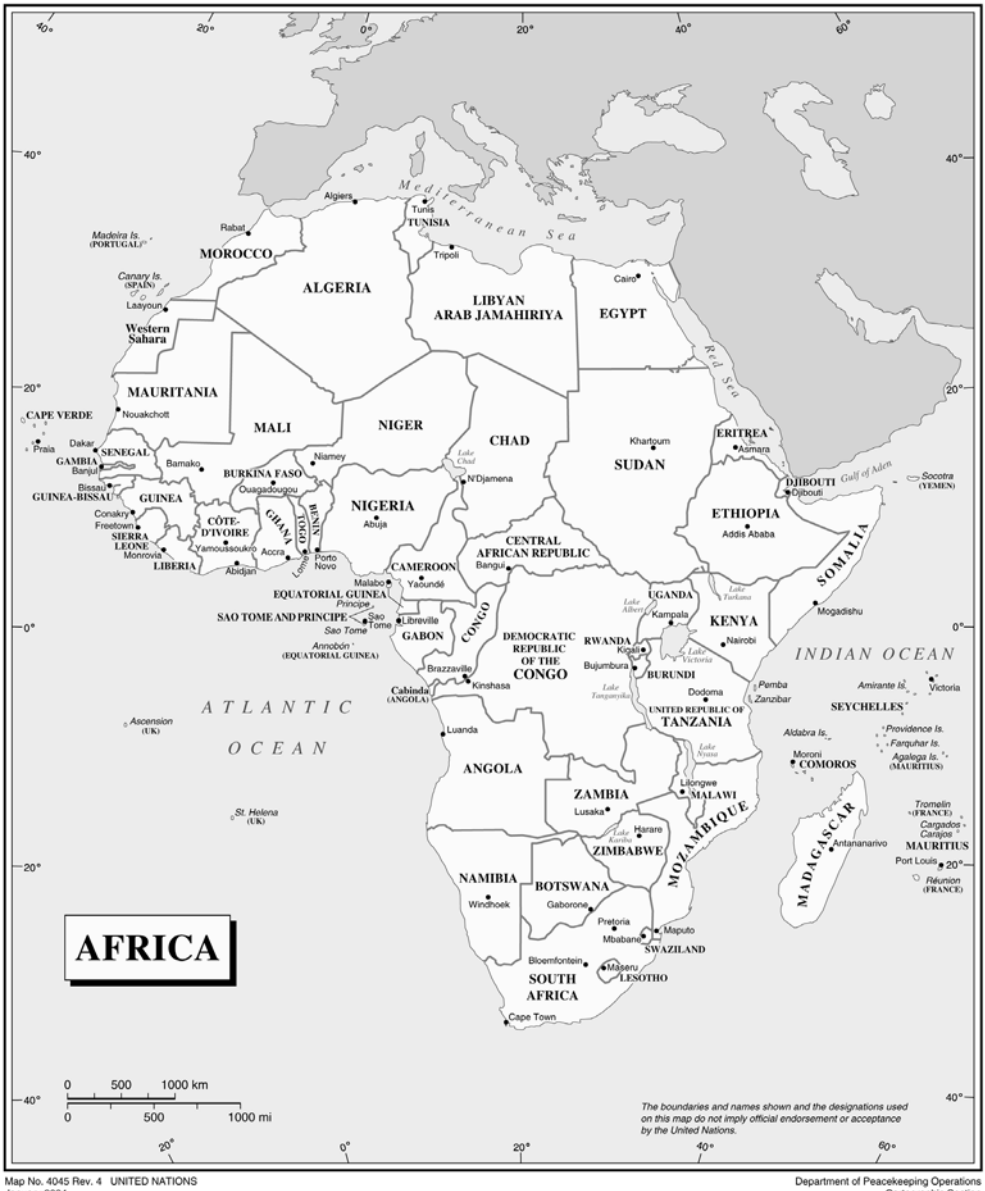
Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
ASAWA	International Association for the Advancement of Women in Africa
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMA	Christian Mothers' Association
CUSAASA	An organization focusing on parliamentarian women
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
EU	European Union
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
FIDA	Federación Internacional de Abogadas–Ghana (International Federation of Lawyers)
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Liberation Front of Mozambique)
GAWE	Ghana Association of Women Entrepreneurs
IFES	International Federation of Electoral Systems
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MYWO	Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization
NCWD	National Council on Women and Development
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NetRight	Network for Women's Rights in Ghana
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPP	New Patriotic Party
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council

SADC	Southern African Development Community
SNV	Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (Netherlands Development Organization)
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNIWAF	United Women's Front
USAID	United States Agency of International Development
WiLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa
WISE	Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association



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CHAPTER ONE

Reclaiming Power

Between 1997 and 2001, approximately 30 women were murdered by a serial killer in Accra, the capital of Ghana. Women lived in fear of the killer and were disillusioned because police indicated they had no leads and because the government did not seem to be placing a priority on the murders. As women watched the tragic events unfold, many decided to take action by forming a coalition of women's groups known as Sisters' Keepers, which placed pressure on the police and the government to solve the murders. In 1999 and 2000, Sisters' Keepers organized numerous demonstrations to bring attention to the killings. Along with members from other women's groups, they recognized an opportunity to increase pressure with the presidential elections in December of 2000. They suggested that President Rawlings and his party, the National Democratic Congress, had effectively dismissed the murders and did not value women or their livelihood. The women's groups encouraged Ghanaians to vote for a different party, one that would take the serial killings seriously and bring the murders to an end.

When the results from the December 7 elections were too close to determine, a runoff election was scheduled and women stepped up the pressure. Shortly after the general elections, Beatrice Duncan, a member of the Federación Internacional de Abogadas–Ghana (FIDA) spoke critically of President Rawlings on a popular radio station, Joy FM: "I would have expected President Rawlings as a father of the nation to make a public statement on TV to inform all Ghanaians about how he is feeling about the situation, what measures he wants to put in place, what resources he would invest in this situation to resolve this issue once and for all . . . I think the government could do more than it is now doing" (Jale 2000). Demonstrations were also planned and executed and were reported in popular

newspapers. On December 18, a member of parliament, Theresa Tagoe, claimed that women had to start protecting their own lives because the police were failing to provide them with protection. She led a demonstration to the office of the inspector general of police to request detailed information regarding the investigations into the serial killings. On December 22, women again protested the murders by marching from a central point of the city to the President's Castle wearing mourning clothes and red armbands while singing dirges and chanting, "We want the president!" They carried signs stating, "Violence against women is a crime," and "IGP (Inspector General of Police) resign now" (Panafrican News Agency 2000).

President Rawlings scoffed at the demonstrations and gave little attention to women's organizations. However, his opponent, John Kufuor, ran a campaign ad during the presidential runoff that specifically addressed the importance of ending the serial killings and making certain that public safety became a primary political issue. Some claim that Kufuor ultimately won the elections because he took the murders seriously (Orhin 2001). In the parliamentary elections the interior minister and his deputy were voted out of office, which was widely believed to be related to their poor record on public safety (Sakyi-Addo 2000).

When President Kufuor took office, members of women's organizations continued their demands, and he took steps to appease women's groups. He created a Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, and he established a Women's Endowment Fund to support female entrepreneurs. The inspector general of the police was also asked to take leave, and he was ultimately moved to a different office. Finally, President Kufuor assured women that more resources would be given to the Ghana Police Services in order to find the serial killer. Four months later, a suspect was arrested and the killings stopped.

AFRICAN WOMEN IN POLITICS

Women in Ghana recognized that the presidential electoral year provided an opportunity to bring attention to their needs, and they took advantage of it. Women were originally fearful of the state in the emerging transition to democracy in 1992, but they quickly overcame their fear, became bolder in their activities, and challenged the government. In this book, Ghana is placed within the larger sub-Saharan African context to examine how sub-Saharan African women mobilized and became politically active with transitions to popular democracies. Similar to other countries in the region, Ghanaian women have stepped up their

pressure on the government to include women and address women's concerns. How and why have women changed their tactics to engage the state?

Women in Ghana are not alone in using the democratization process to their advantage. Across sub-Saharan Africa, women are focusing on democratic openings to get their voices heard. In the Central African Republic in 2003, women demanded that they take part in transitional government institutions and were ultimately granted more seats on the National Transitional Council (UN Integrated Regional Information Networks 2003). For the 2002 presidential elections in Kenya, women's organizations held a demonstration to bring attention to violence against women, requesting that political parties address this issue and that more women hold positions within the government (Good 2002). Because of their remonstrations, women became actively involved in drafting a Kenyan constitution, and their presence increased in the parliament. During the 2003 election year in Guinea, women protested the rising price of commodities, which forced President Lansana Conte to inform importers that prices must be reduced (UN Integrated Regional Information Networks 2003). In Namibia, women's organizations came together to create a women's manifesto in the 1999 election year to encourage more women to participate in elections and politics, to ask political parties to incorporate more women, and to have the president appoint more women as ministers (Frank 1999). As a result, the representation of women in the National Assembly increased from 19 percent to 27 percent.

Women's participation within ministries and other government structures also grew across Africa. Female prime ministers were appointed in Mozambique, São Tomé, and Senegal. President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia was elected the first female president in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, women's legislative participation increased substantially (Tripp 2001a). In 1960, women's legislative representation in the region was the lowest in the world at 0.94 percent. In 1990, when the recent wave of democratization began, it had risen to 7.78 percent. By 2007, and with increased democratization, women more than doubled their presence within formal political structures with a representation level holding at 17.4 percent. Sub-Saharan African women continue to assert themselves in formal politics.

Women's participation in politics should not come as any surprise, since engaging social, political, and economic concerns within community organizations is not new to African women. Prior to colonization in Nigeria, a political system was used among the Igbo in which one woman was chosen to represent the mother of the community and worked with a female cabinet to provide an outlet

for women to address concerns (Sacks 1982). Among the Yoruba, women contributed to the political structure: the *iya oba* would select the king, the *iya kere* crowned the king and could refuse him access to the insignia, and the *iya lagbon* helped run part of the capital city (O'Barr and Firmin-Sellers 1995). In South Africa, the *lovedu queen* was responsible for the fertility of the land and the people. In Sierra Leone during the 1970s, 10 out of 81 paramount chiefs were women (Agorsah 1990). Currently, in Côte d'Ivoire, Baule women can hold the position of lineage elder, village chief, or chief of a cluster of villages. In Ghana, among the Akan and other ethnic groups, women held and continue to hold the position of queenmother, who embodies the knowledge of her lineage, as well as her people, and is expected to impart wisdom to those under her (Stoeltje 1997). She is central to the appointment of the next chief of the Asante and her authority thus influences both royal lineage decisions and general "clan" decisions.

African women also formed community associations to address their social and political concerns. The Kono women of Sierra Leone used the structure of their female secret society, the Sande, to protest the increasing competition for land, which men dominated for commercial farming (Moran 1989; Rosen 1983). In Kenya, between 1920 and 1950, Muslim women from Mombasa organized around dance associations called *lelemama* (Strobel 1976). The lelemama associations provided entertainment, allowed women to gain status, and offered a mutual aid network. When British colonizers banned these associations, women formed new organizations in order to maintain their benefits. The newly created groups, the Arab Women's Institute and the Arab Women's Cultural Association, focused on social welfare and education. Similarly, prior to colonization, Kikuyu women in Kenya belonged to *ndundu* organizations, which divided the women by age lines and addressed agricultural, social, and juridical concerns (Stamp 1986). When Kikuyu women lost control of land with colonization, they reorganized into self-help groups to channel cash from crops into their organizations. In Cameroon, Kom women drew on *anlu,* originally used as a collective action tactic to isolate an offender within a community (Ardener 1977; Diduk 1989; Wipper 1982). Women would gather around the offender's compound to sing insults about the individual while urinating, defecating, and revealing genitalia. In 1958, Anlu transformed to become an organization in which women paid membership fees and held positions. The Anlu organization mobilized women against government institutions and offered help to a political party supporting their interests. Across sub-Saharan Africa, women's participation in organizations persisted with colonization.

National politics did not escape the attention of organized women, who were

involved in both anticolonial and nationalist protests (Maloba 2007; O'Barr and Firmin-Sellers 1995; Urdang 1995; Waylen 1996). In Tanzania, Nigeria, and Kenya, women actively protested against colonial governments that attempted to raise and collect taxes. Women demonstrated either separately or with men and mobilized thousands to protest against colonial governments. Shortly after independence, women continued to play a role in politics. In Nigeria, women influenced election campaigns through the use of their networks and resources after the expulsion of colonial powers. In Tanzania, the main nationalist political organization relied on women to campaign for their objectives. In Guinea, women were central to supporting Sekou Toure's succession to power.

During moments of political instability and during economic crises, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, women relied on community associations to improve their financial situations. Women's groups became especially prominent with the United Nation's Decade for Women, which began in 1975 (Bruchhaus 1992; Pietila and Vickers 1990). Women's organizations placed emphasis on income-generating enterprises, and women pooled resources to smoke fish and make baskets or other goods, which would later be sold. In the process, they increased their social status as they gained more respect from their husbands and other individuals in the community for their enterprising efforts (Dolphyne 1991). Since 1975, women's community associations have flourished and gained international attention.

Although women may not have necessarily wielded more power than men, women clearly were, and many continue to be, actively involved in social, economic, and political issues. What is so perplexing is that in most cases they were not very active in formal national politics prior to the most recent democratization process.[1] With the rise of more successful popular democracies in the late twentieth century, women's participation took off. What were the factors that influenced women's mobilization patterns? How did democratization create new avenues for women across sub-Saharan Africa to engage formal politics?

WOMEN AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN COMPARISON

Although studies on women and democratization proliferated in the 1990s, most focused on women in Eastern Europe and Latin America (Alvarez 1990; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Noonan 1995; Ray and Korteg 1999; Schild 1995; Stephen 1997; Waylen 1994). Within these studies, historical and political contexts were highlighted as central in explaining women's differing mobilization patterns with democratization (Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Okeke-Ihejirika and

Franceschet 2002; Viterna and Fallon 2008; Waylen 1996). Since the political and historical context particular to many countries in sub-Saharan Africa varies considerably from that of Eastern Europe and Latin America, how might women's mobilization patterns differ?

In Eastern Europe, for example, the patterns of democratization were tied to previous communist regimes, which emphasized gender equality and motherhood (Gal and Kligman 2000; Haney 1994; Roman 2001). In addition, women's structures for mobilization against the state were limited. In Latin America, similar to Eastern Europe, regimes relied on using women to symbolize mothers of the nation (Jaquette 1994; Noonan 1995; Rai 1996). Yet in the process, and unlike in Eastern Europe, small community groups were formed to allow women to act as mothers of communities, which eventually led to mass demonstrations against regimes. In sub-Saharan Africa, however, women's mobilization patterns were generally not reliant on government-defined motherhood expectations but rather developed in response to previous co-opting regimes and by preexisting organization structures.

Women's past interactions with government regimes set the tone for the type of mobilization methods used by women in transitions to democracy. For example, because women in Eastern Europe conflated gender equality with communism and unfair workloads, with democratization women tended to withdraw from the public sphere and retreat to the private sphere (Einhorn 1993; Watson 1993). In Latin America, however, the formation of women's groups gave women a place to share grievances and organize against the state despite serious obstacles (Alvarez 1990; Noonan 1995; Ray and Korteg 1999; Schild 1995). Yet, in sub-Saharan Africa, because women were members of various women's organizations before authoritarian rule and before economic hardships that developed in the 1970s, community associations were not a new means to share collective grievances for the purpose of mobilizing against the state.

Instead, what hindered most sub-Saharan African women in emerging democracies, unlike Eastern European and Latin American women, was the existence of large women's organizations tied to the state, which often began under authoritarian regimes and prevented autonomous organizations from fighting for women's issues that may be at odds with the ruling party (Tripp 2000; Waylen 1996).[2] For example, organizations such as Umoja wa Wanawake wa Tanzania, the Women's League of Sierra Leone, the National Union of Malian Women, the 31st December Women's Movement in Ghana, the Better Life Program in Nigeria, or Maendeleo Ya Wanawake in Kenya co-opted women to support the state and gained membership by offering members loans and other incentives to im-

prove their economic and social situations (Tripp 2000). The goal of these women's organizations was to diffuse opposition to the state. Thus, while women's public demonstrations in Latin America contributed to the downfall of authoritarian regimes and the eventual transition to democracy, women's actions within preexisting women's community associations in sub-Saharan Africa were often confined and manipulated by large state-run organizations.

Given the different historical emergence of women's activism in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and sub-Saharan Africa, democratization no doubt influenced women's social-movement patterns considerably. In Eastern Europe, women's participation in national government structures decreased dramatically (Einhorn 1993; Watson 1993). In Latin America, successes were followed by fragmentation among women's groups, since women were told by new political leaders to return to their homes having accomplished their goals, and those who did not were forced to choose between working with or separating from the government (Craske 1998; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Ray and Korteg 1999). In sub-Saharan Africa, however, with democratization women's state-run organizations lost their ability to co-opt and control other women's organizations, allowing for some women's associations to coalesce and form larger movements.

Women's past relationships with regimes, along with their previous mobilization patterns, provide some insight into the differences between African women's movements and those in Eastern Europe and Latin America; however, they still do not explain what motivated women in sub-Saharan Africa to become especially politically active with democratization. With recent transitions to democracy in sub-Saharan Africa, women have shifted their activities from the local to the national level and from informal to the formal political spheres. Why is the situation in sub-Saharan Africa different? Why are women much more politically active then they were previously? And, how have they managed to create this change?

WOMEN AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA

Only recently have scholars turned their attention to women's political patterns with democratization in sub-Saharan Africa, exploring the negative influence of large state-run women's organizations on autonomous women's associations (Okeke-Ihejirika and Franceschet 2002; Tripp 2000), the successes and failures of women becoming involved in the government legislatures (Britton 2005; Geisler 1995; Geisler 2000; Tamale 1999), the change in policies affecting women (Kawamara-Mishambi and Ovonji-Odida 2003; Meintjes 2003; Tripp et

al. 2008), the focus of some women's mobilizations on concepts of development and democracy (Steady 2006), women's participation in restructuring constitutions (Seidman 1999), and the unity of women in times of warfare and conflict (Mikell 1995; Tripp et al. 2008; Steady 2006). However, few studies focus on the specific processes leading to women's mobilizing following democratization. Most studies that do address mobilization tend to focus on South Africa, with an emphasis on women's mobilization through coalitions and alongside the anti-apartheid movement (Britton 2005; Hassim 2006; Seidman 1993). Others suggest that factors such as autonomous women's organizations, economic liberalization, and the development of a "feminist awakening" contribute to women's political participation, but they do not clearly demonstrate the evolution of mobilization (Ekechi 2003; House-Midamba 1996; Mikell 1995). Two additional studies that focus on women's mobilization draw on examples from countries across sub-Saharan Africa and focus on "democratizing trends" within nondemocratic and democratic nations, rather than on the actual process of democratization (Tripp et al. 2008; Tripp 2003b). Thus, more research is needed on the processes contributing to women's political movements in emerging democracies of sub-Saharan Africa. The aim of the current volume is to place Ghana within the larger context of sub-Saharan Africa to explore the development of women's mobilization within a gender and state theoretical framework, one that is highlighted by women's use of their culture of politics.

Gender and state scholars specifically focus on how formal political structures work to the disadvantage of women (Brush 2003; Chapman 1993; MacKinnon 1989; O'Connor, Orloff, and Shaver 1999; Orloff 1996; Pateman 1988; Waylen 1996). Although new democratic systems may allow for increased activism, they may also limit mobilization and outcomes, as is discussed in detail in Chapter 3. Since emerging democratic governments are generally based on Western government structures, they are masculinist in nature in that they tend to exclude women (Brush 2003; Chapman 1993; O'Connor, Orloff, and Shaver 1999). Women's access to resources, public opinion biases against women in politics, and the types of electoral systems women face place women at a significant disadvantage within formal political structures (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Matland 1998; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). The Western government structures were brought with colonization, and the disadvantages they hold for women continue with democratization. The factors that influence women's mobilization processes are particularly important given the obstacles they still face with existing mas-

culinist political structures. In order to confront and possibly overcome these formal political obstacles, women must draw from their culture of politics.

Pearl T. Robinson (1994) envisions the culture of politics as a "political practice that is culturally legitimated and societally validated by local knowledge" (39). She suggests that the culture of politics is constantly in flux and that it is ultimately "the product of a polity's distant and its more proximate political past" (40). Actors are thus continuously negotiating new political systems and institutions and drawing upon past and current experiences to create new political environments. Studies of sub-Saharan African women (Tripp et al. 2008; Tripp 2003b) suggest that women found themselves negotiating new "democratizing trends," the development of more autonomous organizations, increased access to donor funding, increased access to information technology, and the presence of an international women's movement. However, the way in which these factors coalesce in each country ultimately determines the process of mobilization, since the methods of mobilization are tied to local knowledge (Ray 1999; Robinson 1994). Certainly, as will be demonstrated, increased autonomous organizations (or, as suggested in this book, decreased influence of state-run women's organizations); access, particularly to good-governance donor agency funding; use of information technology; and the influence of international women's movement have all contributed to the success of women's activism in Ghana. Yet, the factors contributing to the culture of politics for women in sub-Saharan Africa more generally, and Ghana specifically, are embedded within gendered and political structures.

As discussed previously, women in sub-Saharan Africa have not only been actively involved in informal political systems, placing them in positions of authority, they have also been involved in community associations. Women's participation in informal political structures and community associations provides them with the knowledge, networks, and tools needed to mobilize women to engage the state. In addition, with democratization, women's organizations increased, and preexisting women's organizations began to incorporate nonpartisan political issues into their agendas. Moreover, as will be shown, members of women's organizations also took concepts used within informal political structures to validate women's participation within formal political structures. Using informal political systems and existing women's associations, women are drawing on known gendered structures to negotiate new democratic institutions.

The political structures women are negotiating, however, both open and close opportunities for women. Although the fear created under authoritarian regimes,

combined with large state-run women's organizations used to co-opt other women's organizations, discouraged women's activism in the beginning of democratic transitions (Fallon 2003b), democratization eventually led to the dissipation of authoritarian fear. On the one hand, with increased freedom of speech and association, women were able to lobby governments regarding policies affecting women. The democratic government structure also proved useful in that it allowed women to refer to the constitution and signed conventions in order to achieve their goals. On the other hand, women still faced remnants of authoritarian regimes along with masculinist government structures that place women at a disadvantage.

In examining both gendered and political structures, social movement approaches further help to explain how members of women's organizations initially failed and later succeeded in mobilizing women to engage the state. Specifically, resource mobilization, political-process theory, and the use of collective identities contributed to outcomes. Resource-mobilization scholars argue that resources—material, organizational, or network-related—contribute to women's achievement of their goals (McCarthy 1996; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Piven and Cloward 1977). If members of women's organizations do not have access to material resources, they may not be able to achieve their means. If their organization is weak and has the potential to fragment or fall apart, or if they are not able to gain support from the larger public, they may fail. Yet, if women can draw on preexisting gendered structures to mobilize women, they may succeed in their objectives. The type of resources women have access to therefore helps to determine how members of women's organizations may draw upon their culture of politics.

The change in the political opportunity structure also presents women with the opportunity to engage the state. Proponents of the political-process theory argue that a change in the political structure or divides among political elites may create openings that actors can use to challenge authorities (Almeida 2003; Gamson and Meyer 1996; Kriesi 1995; McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996; Tarrow 1996). Indeed, the transition to democracy and the change in political structures that accompany this transition would afford women the opportunity to engage the state. The democratization process eventually opens doors for women, and certainly creates an impetus needed to challenge state authorities.

Access to resources and recognizing the political opportunity structure coalesces with the use of collective identities. Collective identities form through shared collective histories, experiences, and grievances, and are used by actors to garner greater popular support for their cause (Melucci 1995; Taylor and Whittier 1995). Drawing on preexisting gendered structures, members of women's orga-

nizations mobilize around the idea that only women can represent the needs and concerns of women. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, women in sub-Saharan Africa used this collective identity in the past and continue to rely on it now as they begin to engage the formal political process. Social movement approaches therefore illustrate possibilities for women to negotiate the gendered and political structures they encounter and to recreate their culture of politics.

MOBILIZING WOMEN IN GHANA

Placing Ghana within its broader sub-Saharan African context, this book will examine how women mobilized to become politically active with the transition to popular democracy. There are two primary goals of this book. The first is to demonstrate how gendered and political structures specific to Ghana and other areas of sub-Saharan Africa are central to women's political movements. The culture of politics that shapes the movements contrasts drastically from factors found in Eastern Europe and Latin America. Sub-Saharan African women's negotiations with authoritarian regimes and masculinist government structures combined with their knowledge of and participation in women's group and informal political structures directly contributes to their mobilization patterns. The second goal is to reveal the mobilization processes by using the case study of Ghana. This is achieved by exploring three main themes: (1) how remnants of the authoritarian regime neutralized the activities of women's organizations; (2) how, with the transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes, members of women's organizations started to become bolder in confronting the state, drew on preexisting gendered structures, and ultimately succeeded in mobilizing women for their cause; and (3) how their negotiations with the state have changed since democratization. By focusing on Ghana and bringing in examples from other sub-Saharan African countries, this book demonstrates how women's political mobilization took off with the most recent wave of democratization.

Ghana offers a particularly rich case study to examine women's participation in the formal political process with democratization. Similar to other sub-Saharan African countries, Ghana made the transition to democracy in the early 1990s due to both internal and external pressures. It has informal political systems in which women have held important positions, women's community associations are immense, and more than one decade has passed since the transition to democracy, allowing for examination of how women's actions changed over time. In addition, because the political environment of Ghana has remained relatively stable over the last two decades, Ghana provides the ideal location to explore how

the politically active and emergent women's movement formed with the transition to democracy.

GATHERING THE DATA

My interest in Ghana began in 1990, when I lived there for one year. I knew that the dictator at the time, Flight Lieutenant Jerry J. Rawlings, was considering making the transition to democracy and that it would, no doubt, prove to be an informative period. When I returned to Ghana in 1993 to work as a research assistant to two professors at the University of Legon, I was astounded to see how quickly governing relations had changed after the first elections in 1992. Although Flight Lieutenant Rawlings had by this time assumed the position of president through questionable elections and residual power from the authoritarian regime remained, new independent newspapers were created and people were beginning to openly criticize Rawlings and his government. This ultimately led me to wonder how women were viewing the democratic transition. Before the transition, they were actively involved in community associations, and many were involved in the 31st December Women's Movement, a large governmental organization started by Rawlings and run by his wife. With democratization, the influence of the 31st December Women's Movement could decline. How would women respond to all of these changes?

I returned again for one year in 1997, for the summer of 1999, and for one month in 2004 to conduct interviews and collect data. Over this time period, I surveyed 621 women in urban and rural areas, and I interviewed 39 women from different women's organizations and 17 representatives from 13 different funding institutions. When I arrived in Ghana in 1997, my first objective was to determine if any women's organizations were beginning to address nonpartisan political issues. From my previous contacts, I was put in touch with some highly respected women who either focused on women's issues or were active in civil society. From my initial encounters, I was able to narrow my interviews to members from the following autonomous organizations: Christian Council Women's and Children's Desk, Christian Mothers' Association (CMA), CUSAASA, Federación Internacional de Abogadas–Ghana (FIDA), Ghana Association of Women Entrepreneurs (GAWE), International Association for the Advancement of Women in Africa (ASAWA), United Women's Front (UNIWAF), Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF), and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). My interviews later expanded to include ABANTU for Development, the Domestic Violence Coalition, the Gender Centre, the Network for

Women's Rights in Ghana (NetRight), and the Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE). I also conducted two interviews with representatives from the 31st December Women's Movement.

Many of these organizations focused primarily on issues revolving around women's rights. FIDA, for example, was comprised of women lawyers who counseled women pro bono and set up rights-awareness sessions for women. WiLDAF is an organization that addresses legal rights, but its membership base includes organizations, parliamentarians, and women who are not lawyers. ABANTU for Development is an advocacy group that focuses on gathering and disseminating research in relation to women's rights. The Domestic Violence Coalition, the Gender Centre, and WISE concentrate on domestic violence issues. NetRight is a network of women's organizations throughout Ghana that are currently involved in addressing women's economic rights. Some organizations did not focus directly on women's rights, but incorporated nonpartisan activities into their programs. The Christian Council Women's and Children's Desk, the CMA, and the YWCA used Christian networks to support women, and their priority was to encourage development and support through Christianity. During the 1996 presidential elections, however, they also incorporated nonpartisan political issues into their programs by encouraging their members to vote in elections and emphasizing the importance of formal politics. GAWE helped women to establish their own businesses and in 1996 acted as electoral observers. UNIWAF and ASAWA generally focused on income-generating activities but held democratization workshops throughout Ghana prior to the elections in 1996. Finally, CUSAASA was an organization that attempted to support women standing for political positions.

These organizations were based in the capital city, Accra, which had numerous advantages. First, women's organizations most likely to recognize and utilize political rights would be organizations based where the government is situated. Second, although the membership of most of these organizations was broad and included women from different ethnic, class, and religious backgrounds, many of the leaders were active professional women who were exposed to, aware of, and capable of challenging government policies and actions. Third, these organizations worked closely with smaller community associations throughout Ghana. They appeared to provide links for women, as well as a central base for addressing their concerns nationally. Fourth, these organizations had different goals and strategies, which allowed me to determine which goals most led to their using political strategies to further women's rights.

I chose not to conduct the interviews immediately. Instead I attended meetings, conferences, and workshops in Accra and in rural areas. During the work-

shops, I observed interactions and spoke informally with members. I saw the formal implementation of the meetings and was also exposed to casual interactions. I also wanted women to become familiar with me. I wanted them to know who I was, what I was doing, and what my interests were. Once I felt that I knew the members well enough, I began to conduct interviews. For the interviews, I asked members to tell the story of how they first heard of their organization, how they became involved, and what activities they had been involved in since they joined. I also asked if they felt that the transition to democracy changed their organization's activities. During the interview, I probed for additional information on this topic.

Most impressive during the interview process was the transformations women made from 1997–1998 to the summer of 1999. Although I did encounter some outspoken women during my initial data-gathering trip in 1997, most women were wary of me and the topic of politics. They were hesitant to speak with me, and when they did they wanted to be certain that they were speaking on condition of anonymity. They often displayed distrust either toward me, toward the topic of politics, or both. However, when I returned in 1999, the reaction of the women transformed dramatically. Most respondents were happy to give me interviews, they were vocal about their criticisms against the government, and many informed me that I would be welcome to use their names. The respondents were no longer hesitant and distrustful. Their perspectives and actions changed. I sensed that women were finally overcoming obstacles and were beginning to establish the groundwork necessary for a larger women's movement. The narratives they told affirmed this pattern.

To confirm what I uncovered with in-depth interviews of members of autonomous women's organizations, I also conducted in-depth interviews with representatives from various donor agencies. The donor agencies chosen were the predominant agencies operating in Ghana, as well as the agencies that members worked with. They included the British Council, British High Commission, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), European Union (EU), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Friedrich Naumann Foundation, International Federation of Electoral Systems (IFES), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), National Democratic Institute (NDI), Netherlands Development Organizations (SNV), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the United States Agency of International Development (USAID).

In addition to the interviews, I also conducted surveys. Of the 621 surveys, 305 were carried out in Accra, and 316 were conducted in rural towns located in the

Central Region of Ghana. The surveys were used to determine the impact, if any, of autonomous women's organizations on women's political behavior. The International Federation of Electoral Systems had studied attitudes toward politics and found that those living in the Central Region were more cynical toward formal politics. If women's organizations influenced the political behavior of women in this region, they would most likely have similar effects in other regions. The women surveyed were stratified among lower, middle, and upper classes, and women from all age groups, starting from age 18, were included.

I bolstered my findings through the collection of secondary literature from various organizations, local newspapers, and online news sources since 1996. For the women's organizations, I examined their pamphlets and reports that discuss their activities and goals, and I also watched some videos of their activities. For the donor agencies, I similarly looked at their pamphlets and Web sites to determine their goals. I sifted through local newspapers in Ghana and conducted regular online searches on women's political activities in Ghana and sub-Saharan Africa.

The unusual conditions under which I conducted the interviews must also be noted. Through my informal conversations with friends, acquaintances, and members of women's organizations, I discovered that some respondents knew individuals who were executed by the Provisional National Defense Council, Rawlings's regime, and, as a result, spoke with me on condition of anonymity. Accordingly, I do not include the respondents' names, the names of their organizations, or their ages. The exception is in Chapter 6. The respondents interviewed in December 2004 requested recognition for their organizations. I therefore refer to organizational names but provide no descriptions of the respondents. (For a more detailed discussion of methods, please see Appendix A.)

PLAN FOR THE BOOK

In order to examine the processes leading to women's mobilization with democratization, I begin by focusing on women's culture of politics by presenting a historical backdrop situating women's previous political participation within sub-Saharan Africa and Ghana. I explain how informal political and local associations have operated separately from formal national politics. I further provide a historical overview of Ghana, and explain women's informal and formal political participation over time. In Chapter 3, I explore how sub-Saharan African women, and Ghanaian women in particular, fit within the larger theoretical framework of gender and the state. I discuss patterns found across sub-Saharan Africa and com-

pare them with patterns found within Eastern Europe and Latin America. I also place Ghana within a broader of sub-Saharan Africa context to draw out similarities and differences. In Chapter 4, using narratives from members of women's organizations and representatives of donor agencies, I lay out the primary factors that prevented women's initial mobilization after democratization. In Chapter 5, drawing again on members' own explanations, along with descriptions of government actions or inactions, I demonstrate how multiple factors coalesced to lead to women's successful mobilization against the state. I focus on women's understanding of democratization, the role of collective identity, the impact of donor agencies, and the need for mobilization. In Chapter 6, I discuss the continued obstacles members of women's organizations in Ghana face, with particular emphasis on the state. Specifically, I examine women's efforts to address domestic violence and to push a domestic violence bill through parliament. In the concluding chapter, I revisit women's participation within informal political structures and community associations and what this has meant for women in Ghana and across sub-Saharan Africa in light of democratization. I explore what existing gendered and political structures mean for the future of women's mobilization.

CHAPTER TWO

Queenmothers, Colonization, and the Struggle for Legitimacy

In 1929, in the town of Oloko, Nigeria, a warrant chief attempted to count the goats of one woman, suggesting that women might soon be taxed. The woman, Nwanyeruwa, quickly alerted other women of the occurrence with a high-pitched cry. The women of the area then "sat on" the warrant chief by dancing and singing insulting songs that questioned his manhood. They demanded his resignation and went to the District Office to receive written assurance that they would not be taxed. The warrant chief was arrested and sentenced to two years in jail for attempting to collect taxes without authority. In the meantime, rumors of these actions spread throughout the provinces of Owerri and Calabar by way of women's groups and networks.

Over the next month, there were disturbances across the provinces of Owerri and Calabar. Women "made war" on warrant chiefs to demand their resignation, and they also descended on the British "Native Administrative Centers," which included jails, courts, and offices. The women broke into jails and freed prisoners, and they destroyed or burned 16 Native Courts. The women involved came from rural areas and managed to mobilize tens of thousands of women covering 6,000 square miles (Wipper 1982). Through their actions, they made their demands known: they refused to be taxed, and they did not approve of the Native Courts, which did not allow for female representation. Their collective action lasted for three months.

This description of the Women's War in Nigeria demonstrates how active women could be during the colonial period (Bastian 2002; Van Allen 1976; Wipper 1982). Prior to colonization, women from varying ethnic groups across sub-Saharan Africa held positions of authority. The process of colonization, however,

eroded their position, and with the implementation of formal political systems by colonizers women were further excluded. Although some women reacted to this change and attempted to maintain their authority, as did the Nigerian women, their actions usually wielded limited outcomes. For example, the women's war ended when the British brought in police and soldiers, who destroyed villages and on two occasions opened fire on women, which led to approximately 50 deaths and 50 wounded—all women. With independence movements, women again became actively involved in pushing for the transition. Unfortunately, authoritarian regimes often followed independence, further excluding women. Colonization was the first step in marginalizing women from formal politics; later, authoritarian rule simply reinforced the established patterns.

Women's current political participation is influenced by their past participation within larger gendered and political structures. During the precolonial era, many women in sub-Saharan Africa engaged in local politics and community activities. They also participated in women's community associations, which allowed for links among women across geographical locations. Women often drew on these links, as well as their political positions, to challenge indigenous and colonial authorities. With colonization, however, the formal political structures that were put in place excluded women, and combined with the new market economy, decreased women's social, political, and economic status significantly. During this transformation, women came to rely on their gendered structures, or community associations and informal political organizations, for social and economic support. In the first two parts of this chapter, sub-Saharan African women's political history is situated within the political and gendered structures they negotiate. In the third part, an explanation of how Ghana fits within the historical developments found across sub-Saharan Africa and why Ghana is used as an exemplar country to explore women's past and present political participation is examined.

WOMEN AND COLONIZATION

Gendered Structures. Political systems prior to colonization often offered women opportunities to exert power within their communities. The organization of the structures was usually based along hierarchical lines, within dual gendered systems, or a combination of both (Okonjo 1976; Ortner 1981; Moran 1989; Sudarkasa 1986).[1] Within hierarchical structures, women who hold higher positions represent the needs of women at the lower levels of the hierarchy (Ortner 1981), and within dual gendered systems women work in separate groups and or-

ganizations from men in order to fulfill their social, economic, and political needs (Okonjo 1976; Moran 1989). In the precolonial era, these types of structures were found across sub-Saharan Africa. Among the Igbo, for example, there was a "mother," the *omu,* and under her was a female cabinet, the *ilogo* (Okonjo 1976). This hierarchical gendered organization was instituted and understood at all levels of the lineage, including the village and intra-village levels. Among the Swazi, the mother of the king, along with the king, was responsible for ruling the kingdom (Lebeuf 1963). She had her own court, her own officials, and lived in a separate village. The king and his mother ruled separately, but they kept a check on one another to offer a balance to the kingdom. Among the Luanda, the ruler also ruled alongside a woman, usually his sister (Lebeuf 1963). She also had her own court, officials, and collected her own taxes. In Sierra Leone, Mende women belonged to the Bundu, which was a hierarchically structured political system for women (Berger and White 1999). Through the Bundu, women had the power to influence community decisions and activities. The *ndundu* organizations used in the past by the Kikuyu, as mentioned in Chapter 1, were women's collective organizations that took part in economic, social, and judicial community decisions (Tamale 2000). The Grebo of Liberia continue to have both a male and female council of elders in all towns, and the women actively contribute to community decisions (Moran 1989). The Beng of Côte d'Ivoire have a male and female chief in each town (Gottlieb 1982). In addition, as will be discussed later, ethnic groups within Ghana also organize along dual and hierarchical gendered lines (Stoeltje 1997).

Alongside many of these hierarchically organized and dual gendered political structures existed numerous women who were queens, rulers, or leaders (Sweetman 1984). Queen Amina of Zaria in the mid-1500s was known as a great conqueror who led an army of more than 20,000 men in the takeover of such large cities as Nupe, Kano, and Katsina (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997). Queen Mma Ntatise of the Zulu in the early 1800s asserted the independence of the Tlokwas, led them in a migration westward, and led attacks against and protected them from other Sotho people (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997). In the precolonial kingdom of Burundi, women from the ruling class held political positions and ruled over both women and men in the lower classes (Paulme 1963). The towns of Mampong, Wenchi, and Juaben in Ghana were all founded by women leaders, and prior to colonization numerous female leaders and queens could be found along the East African Swahili coast (Askew 1999). Additional queens, rulers, and chiefs include Queen Yamacouba of the Sherbo in Sierra Leone, royal women of the Wolof State of Waalo in Senegal and Gambia, Queen Ranvalona III of Madagascar, Em-

press Taitu of Ethiopia, and Mwana Mkisi—the first ruler of Mombasa (Snyder and Tadesse 1995; Williams 1997).

Clearly, many women within sub-Saharan Africa had the opportunity to be politically powerful during precolonial times (Achebe 2005; Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997; Lebeuf 1963). They lived within ethnic groups that encouraged women to be politically involved within the community, and some women held ruling positions. Even now, there are communities where women still hold important positions, such as the position of queenmother or that of a chief. For example, in Côte d'Ivoire, Baule women can hold the position of lineage elder, village chief, or chief of a cluster of villages (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997). As mentioned, the Grebo also have a female council along with a male council, and the Beng have both a female and male chief in each town.

The hierarchically organized and dual gendered political structures not only allowed for women's political participation, but they were also often based on the idea that only women could represent the concerns of other women, and, on occasion, they served as vehicles for mobilization. Mary H. Moran (1989), for instance, argues that in some areas of sub-Saharan Africa women believe only other women can represent the social, political, or economic concerns of women. She discusses the formation of women's collective identity by demonstrating how women appeal as a group to authority figures, whether chiefs or individuals within formal state structures. The group comes to represent all women within the community and further represents their appeal as a collective. Their cohesiveness is not based on cultural ideology but rather on the idea that women within the community have similar lived experiences different from men. Because of these differences, only women can understand the grievances of other women. Using an example from the Grebo in Liberia, Moran explains how in 1983 more than 240 women walked for 15 miles to protest a new tax being implemented that would unjustly burden women. They did not believe the men of the government could understand the specific labor and economic situations women faced and thus went collectively to explain the position of women as different from men. Women in other locations have taken similar actions. As Moran explains, the women involved with the Igbo war were demanding representation within the Native Courts. Similarly, the Kono of Sierra Leone have accused chiefs of only representing men, and the Kom in Cameroon attempted to set up judiciary systems for women only. Drawing on the collective identity of womanhood and the lived experience that accompanies this identity, women mobilized to challenge authorities. The hierarchically organized and dual gendered political structures thus allowed for women's political representation as well as

the possibility for women's mobilization against authorities. Given women's historical representation within political, economic, and social community structures, the need for continued representation under colonization and postcolonization is not surprising. The gendered structures provided and continue to provide women a foundation upon which they can draw as they begin to negotiate colonial state structures.

Unfortunately, when women leaders were confronted with colonial powers, their success and resistance was limited (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997). For example, Kimpa Vita, a religious visionary, led a fight against Portuguese missionaries in the Congo during the early 1700s encouraging Africans to reject European products and values; however, because her following was large enough to pose a threat to the missionaries, the missionaries pressured the ruler of the Kongo Kingdom to apprehend and murder her, along with her child. Similarly, in the late 1800s, Nehanda among the Shona (what is today Zimbabwe) was born into the upper classes and gained a following as a religious leader. Along with another priest, she led followers in a resistance movement against the British South African Company. Like Kampa Vida, she was apprehended and executed.

Even when women fought collectively against their colonizers, their impact was minimal, as evidenced in the women's war in Nigeria. The power of the colonizers was too great, and resistance from women usually had detrimental results. In another example, when political activist Harry Thuku was arrested in Kenya for posing a threat to the colonial government, women attempted to spur men to take action (Wipper 1989). Women recognized Thuku as a leader who attempted to end women's indentured labor and the physical and sexual abuse perpetrated against them by the colonials. On March 16, 1921, 7,000–8,000 Kenyans gathered outside the police station and waited for six male representative delegates to return from speaking with colonial authorities. When the representatives relayed to the crowd that Thuku would receive a fair trial and asked the crowd to disperse, a contingent of approximately 150–200 women, who arrived as a group, pushed their way to the front of the protesters and made shrill cries. One woman, Mary Muthoni Nyanjiru, lifted her dress over her head and challenged the men by yelling, "You take my dress and give me your trousers. You men are cowards. What are you waiting for? Our leader is in there. Let's get him" (Rosberg and Nottingham 1966). The British police, as well as British settlers, opened fire on the crowd and killed 21 Kenyans, wounding another 28. Among the dead were four women, including Mary Muthoni Nyanjiru. Instances such as this demonstrate the devastating consequences of resistance within sub-Saharan Africa.

Political Structures. For women, colonization became even more detrimental with the establishment of colonial social, economic, and political institutions. One of the first goals of the European colonizers was to establish an infrastructure, which included the creation of a political system, a judiciary system, and a thriving market economy. Women's exclusion from formal politics was initiated during this time period and often reflected the expectations of women and men in Europe (O'Barr and Firmin-Sellers 1995). Accordingly, women were expected to stay within the home, and men were expected to hold salaried positions within the public sphere. For example, in the Belgian Congo, the missionaries, followed by the colonial government, encouraged women to participate in "foyer socials" that emphasized the notion of motherhood, domesticity, and women's purity (Hunt 1990). By emphasizing domesticity, colonizers hoped to prevent women's active participation in community affairs.

Although women across ethnic groups in sub-Saharan Africa generally wielded some form of power during the precolonial era, their participation in existing indigenous political structures was often overlooked by colonizers. For example, among the Igbo, the *obi,* who represented the needs of men within the community, was appointed and salaried by the British. However, the position of *omu,* who represented the needs of women, was disregarded. Similarly, among the Kikuyu in Kenya, male elders, who had held positions within their lineage prior to colonization, were appointed by the British as chiefs, subchiefs, and judges. The women, who also held positions within their lineages, were not appointed by the colonial government to any such positions (Stamp 1986). Among the Buganda in East Africa, chiefs worked with British colonizers to set up centralized government structures, which excluded the once powerful role of the queenmother, who used to control her own court, land, and taxes (Hanson 2002). Formal political structures were created with the intent of excluding women. Indigenous political structures were undermined by the colonizers' structures, and many women lost their political status within their local communities.

Establishing colonial political structures went hand in hand with the introduction of laws and the market economy. Written law was devised to help guide the formal judiciary systems created by the colonizers. Although some of the law that was written was based on current customary law, it was written without any consultation with females, excluding women from the legal process (Berger and White 1999; O'Barr and Firmin-Sellers 1995). The law that had the greatest impact on women was land ownership. Prior to colonization, land tended to be distributed according to lineage, and was divided within the family (Fall 1997; O'Barr and Firmin-Sellers 1995). In some cases, women had permanent rights over land,

women received land from fathers, and in rare instances, family members inherited land through their mothers (Fall 1997). However, under colonial law, land often became private property that only men owned. Thus, women's access to land depended on their relationship to their husbands, brothers, or fathers, and diminished any real lineage right they may once have had. Women's decreased social status with restricted access to land was further heightened under the market economy, which drew men in while excluding women.

Under direct rule, colonizers first consolidated land for themselves and then gave land to chiefs and subchiefs they appointed in exchange for favors. With both direct and indirect rule, larger plots of land were set aside for the creation of cash crops, and African men, who became owners of the land with written law, were encouraged to farm cash crops. Before colonialism, men and women were both seen as contributing to the household through their agricultural work (Bujra 1986). However, when men were drawn into the cash crops, they were no longer contributing to the household, and women were left to manage subsistence agriculture, which increased their workload. In the meantime, men's access to monetary resources through cash crops was increasing, while women's access was decreasing. For example, among the Beti in Cameroon, women were originally the main farmers of cocoa; yet, by the beginning of the Second World War, cocoa became a cash crop and men dominated these crops (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997). In addition, men who were not farming cash crops were encouraged to seek employment in urban areas. With colonization, schools and jobs were created in urban areas for men to help support administrative colonial structures (Robertson 1986). As men migrated to urban areas for employment, women's status decreased further, since their subsistence agricultural workload increased when their husbands left, and since they were initially excluded from educational and employment opportunities (Bujra 1986). When schools were later built for women, the courses emphasized homemaking skills, further limiting their opportunities. Women's marginalization from the legal process and the market economy thus exacerbated their absence from formal politics.

With independence movements, women glimpsed moments of equality and hope as they participated; however, such moments were often short-lived (Chadya 2003; Waylen 1996). Although women often supported nationalist leaders seeking help from women during independence struggles, once struggles were won, women were usually pushed to the side. For example, in Tanzania, uneducated women formed the bulk of women's nationalist support but were denied government positions with independence (Chayda 2003). Similarly, within countries that staged revolutions in order to gain independence, such as Zimbabwe, An-

gola, and Mozambique, there was a need for women to participate in order to provide the force necessary to succeed (Urdang 1995; Waylen 1996). Because the movements were fighting against inequality, they emphasized equality through the idea of socialism and the notion that women should work as equals and should be respected as equals. Although there were women who did fight side by side the men and were involved in the combat, many of them were relegated to cooking and child-care responsibilities (Chayda 2003). Even when they were involved in the revolution, their roles were still gendered. Once independence was won, the issues of women often took a back seat. For example, in Angola, the men who held government positions supported women by encouraging them to be good mothers and wives. Even in countries such as Mozambique that attempted to implement programs to allow women more access to farming technology and access to local decision-making positions, the national political and economic decision-making roles still fell in the hands of men and national policies failed to address women's concerns. In the end, the idea of socialism that was espoused by the leaders of revolution did not hold up in practice.

Through the political structures put in place by colonizers, women's political participation and status was eroded. Although women attempted to challenge colonials and other authorities by drawing on preexisting gendered structures, the outcomes were often devastating. Even when African governments attempted to be inclusive of women, the historical patterns established by the colonizers held strong, and failed to successfully incorporate women. With colonial rule, women's exclusion from political structures began, and women attempted to maintain some of their social, economic, and political power through their gendered structures. These patterns continued with independence.

WOMEN AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

Despite political action taken by women, women's status did not improve much after independence. Most African countries operated under authoritarian regimes, a government structure that generally excludes women from the formal political process (Chazan 1989; Parpart and Staudt 1989; Tripp 1994). Men had access to resources that women did not have. They obtained their positions either through coups, through bribes to gain positions, or through appointment by other men (Tripp 1994). Meanwhile, women had great demands on their time that kept them away from politics and did not have access to capital since they had no collateral or capital assets and, thus, could not readily obtain loans. Be-

cause women had to work for wages, care for the home, and for their children, men filled the government structures.

With men in political positions, issues related to gender equity tended to be excluded from government policies, which perpetuated women's lower economic status (Chazan 1989; Geisler 1995; Mikell 1995; Mikell 1997; Parpart and Staudt 1989; Tripp 1994). Women's civil and social rights, such as access to health or education, elimination of discrimination, wages, land tenure, and conditions of the informal sector, never became priorities for these governments. Women were also excluded from the formal economy and were discriminated against in the distribution of resources and access to employment—particularly with the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programs dictated by the International Monetary Fund, which led governments to devalue their currencies (Clark and Manuh 1991; Manuh 1993; Mikell 1997; Tripp 1994).

Because of women's exclusion from government structures, many women attempted to find alternative means of addressing economic, social, and political needs, generally turning toward civic associations. These organizations existed during precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial times, but became particularly prominent with the United Nations Decade for Women, which began in 1975 and was coupled with the economic crisis found across sub-Saharan Africa. During this time period, a number of women's groups and organizations formed in order to improve their economic situation and varied in size and shape (Bruchhaus 1992; Dolphyne 1991; Pietila and Vickers 1990; Tripp 1994). Some were formal, with rules, regulations, and specialized division of labor, as well as clear criteria and requirements for membership. Others were informal, typically volunteer-based, groups with no specialized division of labor nor clear criteria and requirements for membership.

Even within conflict areas, women used civic associations to address issues of economic need and political stability. For instance, women in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Rwanda, and the Congo attempted to form coalitions across ethnicity and class to try and overcome the atrocities they faced (African Women and Peace Support Group 2004; Tripp 2003b). In Liberia, women worked together to set up shelters and job-training programs. The Liberian Women's Initiative managed to encourage warring factions to begin the negotiation processes again (Mikell 1995). The presence of gendered organizations demonstrates that women have been socially, economically, and politically active within their communities over time, and also that these organizations provided networks and space for women to address their concerns and to improve their social status.

Unfortunately, numerous women and women's groups were confined by the presence of state organizations that co-opted women's groups. Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa had large women's organizations tied to the state, which prevented them from fighting for women's issues that were at odds with the ruling party (Tripp 2000). Women's organizations, such as Umoja wa Wanawake wa Tanzania, the Women's League of Sierra Leone, the United National Independence Party's Women League in Zambia, the National Union of Malian Women, the 31st December Women's Movement in Ghana, the Better Life Program in Nigeria, and Maendeleo Ya Wanawake in Kenya, were tied to the state, would co-opt women to support the state, and gained membership by offering members loans and other incentives to improve their economic and social situations (Ferguson et al. 1995; Manuh 1993; Staudt and Col 1991; Steady 1976; Tripp 2000; Tripp 1996; Widner 1997). The ultimate goal of these women's organizations was to diffuse any opposition to the state and prevent the mobilization of women (Tripp 2000). For example, in Kenya, women were generally hindered from engaging the state through the existence of the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake, which focused and continues to focus primarily on domestic activities and discourages mobilization for political purposes (Nzomo 1998). Similarly, in Nigeria, a number of state organizations during various regimes (from 1985–1993: Better Life for Rural Women and 1994–1998/9 Family Support Program) attempted to organize women around income generating activities and around the regime. Women were discouraged from focusing on the formal politics.

With the existence of such organizations, how might women in sub-Saharan Africa view the democratization process as an opportunity to improve their rights, and how might women mobilize? Women's previous exclusions from formal political structures, coupled with state organizations that persist with democratization, may discourage mobilization (Tripp 2000). Women might also find it difficult to become involved in formal politics due to constrained time, since they spend much of their time on child care, care of the elderly, and other expected wifely and motherly duties (Britton 2005). With democratization, however, women's organizations may gain more autonomy from state organizations, the stronghold of state organizations may dissipate, and women's organizations may draw on existing gendered structures to mobilize women to participate in the formal political process. In addition, women's participation in politics prior to colonization and continued participation in informal politics and income-generating projects may strengthen their resolve to reenter the formal political sphere.

It is therefore important to examine what happens to women and women's organizations with democratization. What role do state organizations play? How

does residual fear of the authoritarian regime and exclusion from formal politics affect the activities of women's organizations? How will women and members of women's organizations view the democratization process? Will they draw on existing gendered structures?

THE CASE OF GHANA

Ghana provides an exemplar setting to examine the possibility of the mobilization of women with the transition to democracy. As in most, if not all, sub-Saharan countries, Ghana has an active civil society with many different women's organizations at the local and national levels. Women may draw upon these gendered structures to mobilize against authorities. Yet, also as in other sub-Saharan African countries, women have generally been excluded from the formal political process prior to the most recent transition to democracy. Although women were, and some continue to be, politically active within indigenous political structures, colonial political structures did not allow for women's active participation. In addition, prior to the transition and during the transition, women have had to contend with the existence of the 31st December Women's Movement, which is a large women's organization tied to the state that attempts to co-opt women in support of the government. Thus, the 31st December Women's Movement, acting as a political organization, may prevent women from using existing community women's organizations to organize against the state.

Ghana further provides the possibility to examine the intersections of gendered and political structures since its transition to democracy in 1992. Ghana has undergone several presidential elections, and it can be examined over an extended period of time. In addition, some women's organizations in Ghana have attempted to encourage women to participate in the formal political process with the transition to democracy. These organizations hope to mobilize women against the state in order to address their concerns. Women's social-movement patterns, however, hinge on past experiences combined with women's gendered and political knowledge.

As in other sub-Saharan African counties, hierarchically organized and dual gendered structures figure prominently in Ghana. In the Volta region during precolonial times, women who were recognized as adult women (*ked'amidzeba*) played a strong role in societal affairs, and there was a female chief, alongside the male chief, who also contributed to community decisions (Brydon 1996). Although the powers and structures have diminished with colonial rule, female chiefs still exist alongside male chiefs in each town, and women, more generally,

continue to contribute to community decisions. Among the largest linguistic group in Ghana, the Akan, the position of queenmother symbolizes a female political leader who maintains authority parallel to the chief (Gilbert 1993; Stoeltje 1997; Stoeltje 1995). For the Asante, the largest of the Akan groups, the *asantehemaa* is the queenmother of all of the Asante and is viewed as the mother of her clan. She embodies the knowledge of her lineage as well as her people, and is expected to impart wisdom to those under her (Stoeltje 1995; Stoeltje 1997). She holds a formal court once each week with elders to hear matters concerning women or domestic affairs. She also actively participates and is central to the appointment of the next chief of the Asante. Each of the Akan groups operates within a hierarchy inclusive of small villages and towns, with each having their own chief and queenmother. The term for queenmother is *oba panin* in small towns, but for paramount queenmothers the term is *ohemaa,* coupled with the name of the town. The term queenmother has also recently been adopted by additional ethnic groups in Ghana, as well as by professionals to symbolize a woman's authority and representation of and for others (Stoeltje 1995). Hence, the term queenmother relates both to royal positioning and to having authority through the representation of others. The gendered structures of Ghana demonstrate women's local and community participation and also the idea of women's representation. Women are viewed as a collective, as Mary H. Moran (1989) suggests, and they are organized according to a gendered hierarchical structure that could further allow for mobilization.

One queenmother, Yaa Asantewaa, stands out in Ghanaian history, particularly in the fight against British colonizers (Akyeampong and Obeng 1995). In 1896, the British colonials exiled the *asantehene,* the primary ruler of the Asante, along with a number of his chiefs, which contributed to the destabilization of the society. The British believed that in order to solidify their rule over the Asante, they needed to stake claim to the golden stool, which represented the soul, history, and nation of the Asante. In 1900, Governor Arnold Hodgson demanded to sit on the stool, which is normally reserved only for the *asantahene*. This request, an outright offense, led Yaa Asantewaa, a queenmother of one of the Asante states, to take action. She chided the men by challenging their impotency. She stated, "If you the chiefs of the Asante, are going to behave like cowards and not fight, you should exchange your loincloths for my undergarments" (Aidoo 1977, in Akyeampong and Obeng 1995). Through this insult, she galvanized forces to support her in her fight against the British. However, her mobilization efforts were short lived. After seven months, loss of life, and minimal outcomes, Yaa Asantewaa capitulated to the British. She was ultimately exiled to the Seychelles.

The way in which the British treated Yaa Asantewaa is indicative of how they treated women's participation in formal politics. Women's political presence within Ghanaian communities was overlooked as the British set up the formal political system. In 1905, the British attempted to institute the Kumasi Council of Chiefs as an administrative branch of the government and, in the process, did not include queenmothers. The colonial rulers did not view women as fit to hold political positions. In fact, they often complained of the "old women" irritating various chiefs (Allman and Tashjian 2000). In many cases, the British would appoint a chief to a village who was not within the royal family and should not, according to custom, hold that position. Queenmothers, who were to appoint the chiefs, would then openly complain about the appointment, which led to the chiefs' irritation, as suggested by the British. Women's lower status was perpetuated in 1924 when the British implemented the first system for indirect rule, the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance, and women were once again not included.

Women's exclusion from formal political institutions developed by the British was compounded by their decreasing access to land and participation in the cocoa cash crop production (Mikell 1989). Prior to contact with colonizers, which began with the Portuguese in the 1600s, land among the Asante was used for the purpose of subsistence and had minimal worth value. The land was considered owned by the chief of the community, and under the chief each family lineage would control their own given allotment. Within this arrangement, the land was divided between family members, and although women's allotment tended to be less than men's, they still gained access to land. However, with increased contact with the Portuguese, and later the Dutch and the British, the value of land increased. Individuals wanted land to mine gold or to plant crops that they could later trade. This led to a greater demand for land, and because the colonizers primarily negotiated with men, the men began to vie for the land. Eventually, the British began to encourage the farming of cocoa, a cash crop. Many men already had access to more land, so they were automatically drawn into the cash crop production. Although some women did enter the cash crop economy, their plots of land were usually too small to make much of a profit, and the British did not encourage them to farm. For the most part, women were left to focus on subsistence agriculture, while the men were drawn into the market economy.

These types of patterns were not limited to the Asante (Greene 1996). Among the Anlo-Ewe, prior to colonization, women inherited land from their mothers and their fathers, and they could pass on the land they owned to their children or other relatives. They were also actively involved in farming, processing grains, harvesting wickers and reeds, and fishing. However, during colonial times, and

with Christian values that accompanied the colonization process, women lost their rights to land, they no longer fished, and they no longer harvested wickers and reeds. As the fishing industry became more commercialized, the men were drawn into the market economy, while the women were excluded. Women's participation and influence within the community decreased significantly.

Women's diminished social status was exacerbated by their exclusion from education and formal employment. Under British rule, schools were founded by missionaries and later by the British government. These schools were established mainly for the education of boys in order for them to obtain formal sector jobs in cities. Some schools were eventually established for girls; however, the instruction focused on domestic chores, such as sewing or cooking. Under colonial rule, males, unlike females, were expected to earn money, and people soon learned that jobs obtained as a result of education earned more than physical labor would. The historical implementation of education disadvantaged women relative to their male counterparts (Graham 1971; Pellow 1977; Robertson 1984). Ultimately, colonization significantly decreased women's social, economic, and political status. Women were excluded from formal political structures, and with their lessened status within the market economy, educational institutions, and employment opportunities, their likelihood of participating in formal politics was further diminished.

Women again became active during the independence movement. Before Ghana gained independence from Great Britain in 1957, women participated in the anticolonial struggle when they perceived a threat to their economic and social well-being (Pepera 1993). They were active participants in boycotts against policies, such as taxation, implemented by the colonial government. When Kwame Nkrumah became president in 1960, he attempted to incorporate women into the government system. The Representation of the People (Women Members) Act of 1959, (act no. 72), allowed the National Assembly to elect ten additional women to parliament (Pepera 1993). With the implementation of this act, women represented approximately 10 percent of the Assembly. In 1964, Nkrumah declared Ghana a one-party state, yet women representatives were still voted into the Assembly; in 1965 there were 19 women representatives. In 1966, however, Nkrumah was overthrown by General Joseph Ankrah. In the succeeding regimes and republics, women's representation within the government declined (Pepera 1993). In the Second Republic (1969–1972), only one woman was a member of parliament, and in the Third Republic (1979–1981), only five women were members of parliament.

In 1981, Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings came to power in Ghana, and his

regime maintained power until the latest transition to democracy in 1992, when he was elected president. He initially had the support of neo-Marxist intelligentsia, some students, other select intellectuals, and some workers in the larger urban areas, since his intentions were to break the cycle of corrupt and autocratic rule and return the state back to the people (Chazan 1991, Owusu 1989). In the process, however, he attempted to eradicate elites and other members of society who promoted, were tied to, or were thought to be tied to corruption, particularly in relation to hoarding money. His regime, the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), targeted previous political leaders, businessmen, professionals, entrepreneurs, and market women (Chazan 1991; Drah 1993). Although the most severe actions took place at the beginning of his rule, the harassment of these individuals continued throughout the PNDC period. Thus, most learned to live under "the culture of silence"—not speaking out against the government or drawing attention to themselves (Chazan 1991). They also chose not to pursue any activities that may be interpreted as elite or corrupt, as defined by the regime. Market women were targeted as enemies of the state and, in 1982, they were chased out of the army barracks when welcoming the arrival of the new government. They were also locked out of the marketplace and framed as corrupt businesswomen due to the high prices of commodities (Manuh 1993).

Like those of his predecessors, Rawlings's regime did not have a fair representation of women. For example, there was one woman out of 16 cabinet members and one woman out of 29 state ministers in 1985. In 1990, no woman held the position of cabinet member or state minister (Brown, Ghartey, and Ekumah 1996). Even at the local level within the district assemblies, which were established in 1988, only 9.1 percent of the members were women (Pepera 1993).

In part due to women's exclusion from government structures and their treatment by the PNDC, women turned to the existing gendered structures to improve their social and economic situation. During authoritarian rule and with the economic crisis of the 1980s, women's community associations began to flourish. Most women focused on income-generating activities to improve their economic and social status. Indeed, many women gained respect within their communities by participating (Dolphyne 1991). Using preexisting gendered structures with which women were familiar, women chose to work outside existing political structures to provide themselves with economic and social support.

Many women's organizations in Ghana, however, also faced obstacles presented by the 31st December Women's Movement. Rawlings started this movement in 1982, and his wife, Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, became president of the organization in 1985. The ostensible purpose of the organization was to en-

courage women to become involved economically, socially, and politically in the state; however, it acted as an apparatus to mobilize women under PNDC rule (Gyimah-Boadi 1994; Manuh 1993; Manuh 2007; Tsikata 1989). Specifically, the 31st December Women's Movement would entice women to join by offering groups seed money to start income-generating activities. Of course, organizations who did not wish to join, or were not supportive, would not receive financial assistance. This allowed the 31st December Women's Movement to co-opt women's organizations to support their interests, and ultimately the PNDC state (Gyimah-Boadi 1994). Women's general exclusion from politics, combined with the co-optation by the 31st December Women's Movement might help explain their absence from actively engaging formal politics during the transition to democracy.

Despite efforts of the PNDC to quell citizens, in the late 1980s civic groups began to demand a democratic state. The Ghana Trade Union Congress and the National Union of Ghana Students called on the government to respect the fundamental human rights of citizens and to restore constitutional rule (Ninsin 1996). This was followed in 1990 by the formation of the Movements for Freedom and Justice, which called for all Ghanaians to unite for the purposes of creating a democratic state. Similar stances were taken by other organizations, such as the Ghana Bar Association and the Catholic Church. At the same time, donor agencies threatened to withhold funding if the government did not hold democratic elections (Diamond 1999). In 1992, Rawlings and the PNDC conceded to internal and external pressure to hold multiparty elections, and the first elections were held in 1992.

Since 1992, several presidential elections have taken place. The first election was marred by an inflated voters' register and an Electoral Commission appointed by Rawlings (Lyons 1999). The opposition, as well as outside observers, deemed the election unfair and subsequently boycotted the parliamentary elections, leaving the government in Rawlings's hands. In 1996, however, measures were taken to prevent similar fraud. The Electoral Commission was reappointed and appeared more neutral than before. Although Rawlings and his political party, the National Democratic Congress, were again voted into power, international observers deemed the elections "free and fair" (Badu and Larvie n.d.), and opposition parties were willing to accept the outcome (Lyons 1999). By 2000, Rawlings had served his two presidential terms and, according to the constitution, had to step down. Once he left office, the major opposition party, the New Patriotic Party, peacefully came to power through runoff elections in January 2001. Throughout this democratic transition, the government of Ghana underwent continual transformation. The government increased rights to citizens, im-

plemented and upheld multiparty elections, and allowed citizen groups to voice their concerns.

With the transition to democracy, the 31st December Women's Movement continued their activities under the NDC. Even with the transition to the New Patriotic Party, the 31st December Women's Movement's presence remained. As members of autonomous women's organizations in Ghana transitioned into a democratic state, they found themselves facing political structures that they had been excluded from and gendered structures, which they could draw upon to mobilize women but that also had been co-opted by the 31st December Women's Movement.

Examining the history of women's political participation throughout sub-Saharan Africa is central to understanding their current position within an emerging democracy. During the precolonial era, women in various ethnic groups held positions of power. Many had access to political, economic, and social power through the existence of hierarchically organized and dual gendered political structures. Others were able to hold the position of queen or become rulers. However, with colonial rule came the implementation of new political, economic, and social frameworks that systematically excluded women. Not only were women denied participation in formal political structures when they were created, but they were also placed in significantly lower socioeconomic positions when they were excluded from legal structures, the market economy, education, and urban employment. Therefore, the lack of women in current formal political systems is not surprising. Often the pattern was established with colonization and reinforced under authoritarian regimes.

This is certainly true in Ghana. Prior to colonial times, women were actively involved in the political administration. Some women, such as Yaa Asantewaa, gained leadership positions and attempted to fight against the colonial government. However, the resistance was unsuccessful, and the British government managed to suppress the Asante and to implement structures that excluded women. Unfortunately, these patterns were reinforced after independence and under authoritarian regimes. The existence of the 31st December Women's Movement further curtailed any political interests that women may have had. Women's lack of political investment and participation within Ghana, as well as the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, is tied to the patterns of exclusion that began with colonization.

With democratization, however, women find themselves facing a new political opening. If women draw upon their historical knowledge of women's politi-

cal representation and take the notion, as presented by Mary H. Moran, that only women can represent the needs of women, they may be able to push for women's active political participation within formal political structures. Many women across sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly within Ghana, still participate in informal political structures that may work to their advantage as they begin to negotiate the new formal political structures instituted with democratization. Thus, the culture of politics that women must negotiate places them at a crossroads between gendered structures that could work to their favor and political structures that could work against them.

Many sub-Saharan women have taken the lead and have engaged the democratization process. They have worked on new constitutions, they have demanded new quota systems, they have lobbied the government on issues that are vital to women, and they have actively voted in and stood for elections. Women have recognized the process of democratization as a crucial opening for change, and they are taking advantage of it. Yet how did this come about? Did previous political structures, such as authoritarian regimes, impact women's behaviors? How did women overcome these fears? Did existing gendered structures, such as preexisting autonomous women's organizations, help to mobilize women? Most importantly, how did the political and social contexts particular to Ghana, and to many other countries within sub-Saharan Africa, shape women's political mobilizations?

CHAPTER THREE

Democracy in Perspective

From Eastern Europe to Latin America and now to sub-Saharan Africa, a new wave of democratization has swept across the world. As more and more countries adopt democratic institutions, scholars are exploring what led to the process of democratization and how transitions are affecting citizens. Within this scholarship, literature addressing women and democratization has risen to the fore. In particular, scholars focus on women's participation in the democratization process and how women's positions have transformed post-transition. Yet most studies on women and democratization focus on Eastern Europe and Latin America. Given that women of sub-Saharan Africa have radically different colonial and state histories, how might they be affected by their transition to democracy? How are their experiences different than their sisters' in Eastern Europe and Latin America?

Women in Ghana share some common characteristics with women across sub-Saharan Africa that are also quite specifc to the continent. First, women have systematically been excluded from formal political institutions with the process of colonization. Moreover, the current political institutions that are adopted with democratization tend to be masculinist in nature, preventing women's equal participation in politics. Second, many women transitioning from authoritarian regimes also have had to contend with large state-run women's organizations that co-opted women's groups and prevented them from engaging authoritarian states. State-run organizations often continue to exist with transitions and may still prevent women from engaging newly created democratic governments. Women's previous negative negotiations with the state may thus prevent them from mobilizing with democratization.

Yet, women also have positive political examples and existing gendered networks to draw upon in order to overcome these obstacles. Historically, many women have been exposed to, if not participated in, informal political structures. They recognize that women held high political positions, that women took on colonial powers, and that women gained respect within their communities. In some places, these informal political structures are still in place. In addition, women have widely participated in women-based groups, whether as part of lineages, kin groups, or other similar formations. As demonstrated in the Women's War in Nigeria, these groups acted as support networks, and were drawn upon for the purpose of mobilization. Given sub-Saharan African women's culture of politics at the moment of transition, how might women's prior negative interactions with the state, combined with women's knowledge of women's group formations and informal political participation, shape their mobilization processes? Moreover, given different historical trajectories, how might the patterns in Ghana, and more broadly in sub-Saharan Africa, differ from those of Latin America and Eastern Europe?

In order to understand women's mobilization processes, the obstacles they are up against at the moment of democratization must first be recognized. In this chapter, the continuing legacy of Western-imported political structures is discussed to explore how this influences women's political negotiations. This is followed by an examination of the effects of state co-optation on women during predemocratic eras, and then by a section on postdemocratic responses. In these sections, how democratization impacts women of sub-Saharan Africa, in comparison to women in other areas of the world, is emphasized. In particular, how the historical and political contexts specific to sub-Saharan Africa shape women's mobilization patterns are explored.

WOMEN AND WESTERN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

With colonization, sub-Saharan African women were quickly edged out of formal political institutions. Even in instances where women were actively engaged in precolonial community political structures, colonists gave recognition to men and not to women. When Western political structures were imported to sub-Saharan Africa, masculinist notions that surrounded formal politics were also imported. Western political philosophers, such as Rousseau and Locke, who theorized the development of states and state institutions, suggested that the domain of women should be that of the home and not of politics (Hobson, Lewis, and Siim 2002; Pateman 1988; Sperling 2001). With the construction of political in-

stitutions, women were not considered as active participants and were therefore excluded from the beginning, making the domain of formal politics masculine in nature. These masculinist government structures were then exported to developing countries through the process of colonization (Waylen 1996).

The effect of masculinist political structures on women is most apparent when examining women's legislative representation. The world average is at 17.5 percent, and the average for sub-Saharan Africa is also 17.5 percent. The highest rates of women's representation are in Nordic countries, at 41.6 percent, followed by the Americas at 19.4 percent. The lowest representation is found within Arab states at 9.5 percent (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2007). Women are excluded from national political structures. Their participation is further exacerbated by the type of political system implemented. Electoral systems that operate by simple majority rather than by proportional representation are less likely to encourage women's legislative representation (Darcy, Welch, and Clark 1994; Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Matland 1998; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Yoon 2001). Majoritarian systems, where the electorate votes for a specific person, require that each candidate provide their own campaign financing and develop their own platforms. This requires resources, which many women do not have. In addition, citizens may be more likely to vote for a man since they view men as more appropriate for political positions (Paxton and Kunovich 2003). By contrast, in proportional representation systems the electorate votes for a party rather than a person, and the number of votes won by that party determines the number of legislative seats that party will occupy. The party fills those seats with individuals from a preselected "list" of candidates. This system generally allows women better access to political positions, because they have the resources and platform of the party and because less focus is placed on gender differences between candidates. A proportional representation system does not guarantee that women will be placed on election lists, but over time and across cases, this variable is consistently found to improve women's legislative representation. Women's low representation even with democratization is thus not surprising given that most women have little access to resources and that many government systems developed with the intent of excluding women.

In order to overcome these biases, women in some countries around the world have lobbied for quotas, while some actors within governments also chose to implement quotas. Gender quotas are central for improving women's presence within national institutional structures (Tripp and Kang 2007; Waylen 2007; Yoon 2001). Although some studies argue that quota systems may simply work to reinforce party agendas, if applied properly, and if reinforced by a politically ex-

ternal women's movement, quotas could have a significant impact on women's citizenship (Dahlerup 2006; Longman 2006). Nations that have proportional representation systems can institute gender quotas by requiring parties to include a certain percentage of women on their lists of electoral candidates. Alternatively, quotas may be instituted geographically, such that, in addition to its "regular" representation, each region is allotted a specified number of additional political seats that are reserved explicitly for women. Whether quotas actually achieve greater representation for women is dependent on the type of system implemented (Bauer 2004; Dahlerup and Friedenvall 2005; Gray 2002; Jones 1998; Tinker 2004; Vincent 2004). Systems that require women to be placed at intervals along a closed party list, for example, will result in more women being elected than systems where women can be clustered close to the bottom of the list. (Candidates are drawn from the top of the list.) Likewise, smaller districts, where parties are only allocated one or two seats, will not result in the election of as many women as larger districts with multiple seats (Htun and Jones 2002). Although women's initial legislative gains from quota systems appeared only mildly successful (Htun and Jones 2002); results from recent elections indicate greater potential (Tripp and Kang 2007).

Sub-Saharan African women face many structural constraints within their political systems. Table 1 lists all sub-Saharan African countries, rates of women's representation, the type of political system used, and whether or not quotas are implemented. The variation across countries is apparent. What is most striking is that democratic countries that have higher legislative representation for women tend to be in the southern regions and members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which now advocates for 50 percent representation of women within legislative bodies. Although pressure from the SADC most likely has influenced women's increased representation, other factors are also at work. Most of these countries transitioned from independence or liberation conflicts. In South Africa, for example, women learned from past experiences of neighboring countries that they needed to insert themselves at the moment of transition to gain gender rights (Britton 2002; Hassim 2002; Hassim 2006; Geisler 2000; McEwan 2000; Viterna and Fallon 2008). Women formed a coalition, lobbied for proportional representation and quotas within political parties, and framed women's participation in politics around the same language that was used to dismantle apartheid: equality and dignity for all. In Namibia and Mozambique, women similarly learned from their own past experiences and transitioned from civil strife (Geisler 2000; Seidman 1993). Moreover, women from southern

TABLE I.
Political Systems, Women's Legislative Representation, and Quotas in Sub-Saharan Africa

Country	Type of rule[1] and electoral system[2]	Transition to democracy (if made)[3]	Number of women in national assembly[4]	Quota systems[5]
Angola	Multiparty democracy with a strong presidential system; Restricted; List PR	———[6]	33 of 220 seats or 15% (1992, next election 2008)	———
Benin	Republic under multiparty democratic rule; List PR	1991[7]	7 of 83 seats or 8.4% (2007, next election 2011)	———
Botswana	Parliamentary republic; Majority	1966	7 of 63 seats or 11.11% (2004, next election 2009)	Party—30% women on electoral lists
Burkina Faso	Parliamentary republic; List PR	2002[8]	17 of 111 seats or 15.3% (2007, next election 2012)	Party—25% women on electoral lists
Burundi	Republic; List PR	2005[9]	36 of 118 seats or 30.51% (2005, next election 2010)	Constitutional—30% of seats in parliament; Electoral Law—25% of candidates
Cameroon	Unitary republic; Multiparty presidential regime; Majority; Restricted	———[10]	23 of 163 seats or 14.1% (2007, next election 2012)	Party—25–30% women on electoral lists

[1]The World Fact Book, www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html.

[2]For electoral system information, see International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, www.idea.int/esd/. Electoral system abbreviations used here include list proportional representation (list PR), plural majority (majority), and a combination of proportional representation and plural majority (both). "Restricted" democracies are governments that are set up to be democratic but in practice do not uphold democratic values and often deny public freedoms.

[3]African Elections Database, http://africanelections.tripod.com/; World Fact Book, www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html.

[4]Inter-Parliamentary Union, PARLINE Database, www.ipu.org/english/home.htm.

[5]The Quota Project, www.quotaproject.org. Four types of quotas are identified: (1) constitutional quotas at the national level; (2) electoral law or other legislatives quotas at the national level; (3) Sub-national quotas for local and regional governments; and (4) party-level quotas within individual political parties. Quota amounts identified for party-level quotas are a range reflecting multiple parties or a single amount reflecting a single party. Separate parties are not identified for sake of simplicity.

[6]First elections were held in 1992, but they have since been suspended due to civil war (See Inter-Parliamentary Union, PARLINE Database, www.ipu.org/english/home.htm.)

[7]Michael Bratton and Nicolas Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 197.

[8]Ibid.

[9]First transition was in 1993 (see Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197), but was lost during subsequent civil war. New elections were held in 2005 following peace accords.

[10]Aili Mari Tripp and Lynn Walter, eds., *Greenwood Encyclopedia of Women's Issues Worldwide,* vol. 6 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2003), 82.

(*continued*)

TABLE I.
Continued

Country	Type of rule[1] and electoral system[2]	Transition to democracy (if made)[3]	Number of women in national assembly[4]	Quota systems[5]
Cape Verde	Republic; List PR	1991[11]	11 of 72 seats or 15.3% (2006, next election 2011)	———
Central African Republic	Republic; Majority	2005[12]	11 of 105 seats or 10.5% (2005, next election 2010)	———
Chad	Republic; Majority; Restricted	———	10 of 155 seats or 6.5% (2002, next election 2009)	———
Comoros	Independent republic; Majority	2002[13]	1 of 33 seats or 3.03% (2004, next election 2009)	———
Côte d'Ivoire	Restricted democratic process; Majority	———[14]	19 of 223 seats or 8.52% (2000, next election 2008)	Party—30% women on electoral lists
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Undergoing a transition to representative government	———[15]	42 of 500 seats or 8.4% (2006, next election 2011)	———
Djibouti	Republic; Majority	1992[16]	7 of 65 seats or 10.77 % (2003, next election 2008)	Electoral Law—10% of seats in parliament
Equatorial Guinea	Republic; List PR; Restricted	———	18 of 100 seats or 18.00% (2004, next election 2009)	Party—No data on quota amount
Eritrea	Transitional government; One-party state in this transitional form	———[17]	33 of 150 or 22.00% (2000, next election post poned indefinitely)[18]	Electoral Law—30% of seats in national and regional assemblies
Ethiopia	Federal republic; Majority	2000	117 of 546 or 21.43% (2005, next election 2010)	Party—30% quota of women candidates

[11]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197.

[12]First free and fair elections were held in 1993 (see Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197), but a military coup followed in 2003. Subsequently, elections were held in March and May of 2005.

[13]First elections as attempt at transition in March 1990. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197.) A military coup occurred in 1999, followed by a new constitution in December 2001. Elections were then held in spring 2002.

[14]First transition to democracy was in 1960, however a military coup in December 1999 toppled the government. Flawed elections were subsequently held in late 2000.

[15]Transitional government established in 2003.

[16]A multiparty constitution was approved through referendum in September 1992.

[17]Began in 1993 at time of independence, but still considered to be in transition. (See Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia,* 6:110.)

[18]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia,* 6:117.

TABLE I.
Continued

Country	Type of rule[1] and electoral system[2]	Transition to democracy (if made)[3]	Number of women in national assembly[4]	Quota systems[5]
Gabon	Republic; Multiparty presidential regime; Majority	1990	15 of 120 or 12.5% (2001, next elec-) tion 2011	———
Ghana	Constitutional democracy; Majority	1992[19]	25 of 230 seats or 10.87% (2004, next election 2008)	Electoral Law—Previously had quota system in 1960 and 1965 elections reserving 10 seats for women
Guinea	Republic; Both; Restricted	———[20]	22 of 114 seats or 19.30% (2002, next election 2008)	———
Guinea-Bissau	Republic; List PR	2005[21]	14 of 102 seats or 13.73% (2004, next election 2008)	———
Kenya	Republic; Majority	1991[22]	16 of 224 seats or 7.14% (2002. Last election 2007, but outcome unknown due to political instability)	Constitutional—6 appointed seats in parliament reserved for women; Party
Lesotho	Parliamentary constitutional monarchy; Both	1993[23]	28 of 119 seats or 23.5% (2007, next election 2012)	Sub-national—30% of seats in local government reserved for women
Liberia	Republic; Majority	2005[24]	8 of 64 seats or 12.50% (2005, next election 2011)	Electoral Law—30% quota for women on electoral lists
Madagascar	Republic; Majority	1993[25]	10 of 125 or 8% (2007, next election 2012)	———
Malawi	Multiparty democracy; Majority	1994[26]	26 of 191 seats or 13.61% (2004, next election 2009)	Party—25–33% of seats allocated to women

[19]Ibid., 155.
[20]Ibid., 180.
[21]First multiparty elections were held in 1994. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.) A civil war in 1998 and a coup in 2003 derailed democracy, but elections were held again in 2005.
[22]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:202.
[23]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.
[24]The first democratic multiparty elections since the 2003 peace accords were held October 11, 2005 (See Inter-Parliamentary Union, PARLINE Database, www.ipu.org/english/home.htm.)
[25]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.
[26]Ibid.

(*continued*)

TABLE I.
Continued

Country	Type of rule[1] and electoral system[2]	Transition to democracy (if made)[3]	Number of women in national assembly[4]	Quota systems[5]
Mali	Republic; Majority	1992[27]	15 of 147 seats or 10.20% (2007, next election 2012)	Party—30% quota
Mauritania	Republic; Majority	2007[28]	17 of 95 seats or 17.9% (2006, next election 2011)	———
Mauritius	Parliamentary democracy; Majority	1976[29]	12 of 70 seats or 17.14% (2005, next election 2010)	———
Mozambique	Multiparty democracy[30]; List PR	1994[31]	87 of 250 seats or 34.80% (2004, next election 2009)	Party—30% of candidates women
Namibia	Parliamentary democracy[32]; List PR	1990[33]	21 of 78 seats or 26.92% (2004, next election 2009)	Sub-national—30% of party lists reserved for women in local authority elections; Party—50% quotas on electoral lists
Niger	Republic; List PR	1999[34]	14 of 113 seats or 12.39% (2004, next election 2009)	Electoral Law—10% of all elected positions in each party allotted to women; Party—5 seats set aside for women
Nigeria	Multiparty democracy[35]; Majority	1999[36]	25 of 358 seats or 7% (2007, next election 2011)	———
Republic of Congo	Republic; Restricted; Majority	———[37]	10 of 135 seats or 7.4% (2007, next election 2012)	———

[27]Ibid.
[28]Ibid. A bloodless coup occurred in 2005 with no subsequent return to democracy as of mid-2006.
[29]International IDEA, Voter Turnout Database, www.idea.int/vt/.
[30]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:256.
[31]Ibid.
[32]Ibid., 272.
[33]Ibid.. 272.
[34]First multiparty elections held in March 1993. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.) Coups followed in 1996 and 1999, with a return to democratic elections in 1999.
[35]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:311.
[36]Ibid.
[37]First transition with elections in August 1992. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.) Civil war toppled the government in 1997, and a new round of elections were finally held in 2002.

TABLE I.
Continued

Country	Type of rule[1] and electoral system[2]	Transition to democracy (if made)[3]	Number of women in national assembly[4]	Quota systems[5]
Rwanda	Multiparty system; Restricted[38]; List PR	———[39]	39 of 80 seats or 48.75% (2003, next election 2008)	Constitutional—30% reservation for women; Electoral Law—24 of 80 seats reserved for women; Sub-national—20% of councilors at local level to be women
São Tomé and Príncipe	Republic; List PR	1991[40]	4 of 55 seats or 7.3% (2006, next election 2010)	———
Senegal	Multiparty democratic rule[41]; Both	2000[42]	33 of 150 seats or 22% (2007, next election 2013)	Party—25–33% quotas
Seychelles	Republic; Both	1993[43]	8 of 34 seats or 23.5% (2007, next election 2012)	———
Sierra Leone	Constitutional democracy; List PR	2002[44]	16 of 124 seats or 12.9% (2007, next election 2012)	Party—50% quota for candidates
Somalia	No permanent national government; Transitional, parliamentary federal government	———[45]	22 of 275 seats or 8.00%; assembly remains resident in Nairobi, Kenya, and has not yet established effective governance inside Somalia. (2004, next election N/A)	Constitutional—12% reservation of seats for women in Transitional Federal Parliament
South Africa	Republic; List PR	1994[46]	131 of 400 seats or 32.75% (2004, next election 2009)	Sub-national—50% of candidates for list elections at

[38]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:352.
[39]First post-war presidential and legislative elections were held in 2003.
[40]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.
[41]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:365.
[42]Ibid.
[43]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.
[44]Original move towards democracy occurred with establishment of multiparty system in the constitution of October 1, 1991; however, civil war from 1991 to 2002 derailed democracy until elections could be held in 2002.
[45]Without central government since 1991. (See Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:397.)
[46]First multiracial elections. (See International IDEA, Voter Turnout Database, www.idea.int/vt/.)

(*continued*)

TABLE I.
Continued

Country	Type of rule[1] and electoral system[2]	Transition to democracy (if made)[3]	Number of women in national assembly[4]	Quota systems[5]
				local level to be women; Party—30% quota for electoral lists
Sudan	Authoritarian regime; Majority	———	66 of 450 seats or 14.67% (2000 or 2005, next election NA)	Electoral Law—60 of 450 seats (13%) in national assembly reserved for women
Swaziland	Monarchy; Majority	———	7 of 65 seats or 10.77% (2003, next election N/A)	———
Tanzania	Republic; Majority	1995[47]	97 of 319 seats or 30.4% (2005, next election 2010)	Constitutional—special seats for women in parliament not to be less than 20%; Electoral Law—75 of 319 seats reserved for women in parliament (2005); Subnational—local level reserves 25% of seats for women.
The Gambia	Multiparty democracy; Majority	2001[48]	5 of 53 seats or 9.4% (2007, next election 2011)	———
Togo	Republic under transition to multiparty democratic rule; Restricted; Majority	———[49]	6 of 81 seats or 7.4% (2007, next election 2012)	———

[47]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:464.
[48]Multiparty elections reinstated in 2001 following a coup in 1994.
[49]This transition has been seen as tentative due to corruption. (See Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:471.)

TABLE 1.
Continued

Country	Type of rule[1] and electoral system[2]	Transition to democracy (if made)[3]	Number of women in national assembly[4]	Quota systems[5]
Uganda	Republic; Majority; Restricted	———	99 of 332 seats or 29.8% (2006, next election 2011)	Constitutional—one woman representative from every district (56 seats); Electoral Law—56 indirectly elected women representatives; Sub-national—one third of local government council reserved for women.
Zambia	Republic; Majority	1991[50]	23 of 157 seats or 14.6% (2006, next election 2011)	———
Zimbabwe	Parliamentary democracy; Majority; Restricted	———	24 of 150 seats or 16.00% (2005, next election 2010)	Party—30 female candidates to be fielded

[50]The first multiparty elections were held on October 31, 1991, but fraud was suspected.

Africa, since many of them lived in exile and often in neighboring countries, exchanged advice and learned from one another.

Unfortunately, as presented in Table 2, most countries, like Ghana, transitioned from authoritarian regimes. With democratic transitions, new ruling democratic parties are often based on previous regimes and continue to hold on to authoritarian practices. As discussed in Chapter 2, many women must also contend with large state-run women's organizations that are often tied to previous regimes and are used to co-opt women. Women facing these types of obstacles would not form mobilization patterns like those found in southern Africa. Instead, most would negotiate remnants of authoritarian regimes along with unfavorable electoral systems. Due to the tight hold of authoritarian regimes with democratization, many women were not involved in rewriting constitutions or debating types of political structures to implement, perhaps explaining why most countries adopted plural majority systems with limited quota outcomes. Of the

TABLE 2.
Types of Democratic Transitions Made

Country	Transition to democracy (if made)[1]	Transition from
Angola	———[2]	Civil strife
Benin	1991[3]	Authoritarian regime
Botswana	1966	Authoritarian regime (colonial rule)
Burkina Faso	2002[4]	Authoritarian regime
Burundi	2005[5]	Civil strife
Cameroon	———	
Cape Verde	1991[6]	Authoritarian regime
Central African Republic	2005[7]	Civil strife (coup)/ authoritarian regime
Chad	———	
Comoros	2002[8]	Civil strife (coups)/ authoritarian regime
Côte d'Ivoire	———[9]	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	———[10]	
Djibouti	1992[11]	Authoritarian regime
Equatorial Guinea	———	
Eritrea	———[12]	
Ethiopia	2000	Authoritarian regime
Gabon	1990	Authoritarian regime
Ghana	1992[13]	Authoritarian regime
Guinea	———[14]	
Guinea-Bissau	2005[15]	Civil strife (coups)/ authoritarian regime
Kenya	1991[16]	Authoritarian regime
Lesotho	1993[17]	Authoritarian regime
Liberia	2005[18]	Civil strife

[1]African Elections Database, http://africanelections.tripod.com/; The World Fact Book, www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html

[2]First elections were held in 1992, but they have since been suspended due to civil war. (See Inter-Parliamentary Union, PARLINE Database, www.ipu.org/english/home.htm.)

[3]Michael Bratton and Nicolas Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 197.

[4]Ibid.

[5]First transition was in 1993 (see Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197), but was lost during subsequent civil war. New elections were held in 2005 following peace accords.

[6]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197.

[7]First free and fair elections were held in 1993 (see Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197), but a military coup followed in 2003. Subsequently, elections were held in March and May of 2005.

[8]First elections as attempt at transition in March 1990. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197.) A military coup occurred in 1999, followed by a new constitution in December 2001. Elections were then held in spring 2002.

[9]First transition to democracy was in 1960; however, a military coup in December 1999 toppled the government. Flawed elections were subsequently held in late 2000.

[10]Transitional government established in 2003.

[11]A multiparty constitution was approved through referendum in September 1992.

[12]Began in 1993 at time of independence, but still considered to be in transition. (See Aili Mari Tripp and Lynn Walker, eds., *Greenwood Encyclopedia of Women's Issues Worldwide,* vol. 6 [Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2003], 110).

[13]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia,* 6:155.

[14]Ibid., 180.

[15]First multiparty elections were held in 1994. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197.) A civil war in 1998 and a coup in 2003 derailed democracy, but elections were held again in 2005.

[16]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia,* 6:202.

[17]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa,* 197.

[18]The first democratic multiparty elections since the 2003 peace accords were held October 11, 2005. (See Inter-Parliamentary Union, PARLINE Database, www.ipu.org/english/home.htm.)

TABLE 2.
Continued

Country	Transition to democracy (if made)[1]	Transition from
Madagascar	1993[19]	Authoritarian regime
Malawi	1994[20]	Authoritarian regime
Mali	1992[21]	Authoritarian regime
Mauritania	2007[22]	Authoritarian regime
Mauritius	1976[23]	Authoritarian regime (colonial rule)
Mozambique	1994[24]	Civil strife
Namibia	1990[25]	Civil strife (war of independence)
Niger	1999[26]	Civil strife (coups)/ authoritarian regime
Nigeria	1999[27]	Authoritarian regime
Republic of Congo	———[28]	
Rwanda	———[29]	
São Tomé and Príncipe	1991[30]	Authoritarian regime
Senegal	2000[31]	Authoritarian regime (colonial rule)
Seychelles	1993[32]	Authoritarian regime
Sierra Leone	2002[33]	Civil strife
Somalia	———[34]	
South Africa	1994[35]	Civil strife/ authoritarian regime
Sudan	———	
Swaziland	———	
Tanzania	1995	Authoritarian regime
The Gambia	2001[36]	Civil strife (coup)/ authoritarian regime
Togo	———[37]	
Uganda	———	
Zambia	1991[38]	Authoritarian regime
Zimbabwe	———	

[19]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.
[20]Ibid.
[21]Ibid.
[22]First multiparty elections were held in April 1992. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.) A bloodless coup occurred in 2005, with no subsequent return to democracy as of mid-2006.
[23]International IDEA, Voter Turnout Database, www.idea.int/vt/.
[24]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:256.
[25]Ibid., 6:272.
[26]First multiparty elections held in March 1993. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.) Coups followed in 1996 and 1999, with a return to democratic elections in 1999.
[27]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:311.
[28]First transition with elections in August 1992. (See Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.) Civil war toppled the government in 1997 and a new round of elections were finally held in 2002.
[29]First post-war presidential and legislative elections were held in 2003.
[30]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.
[31]Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:365.
[32]Bratton and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa*, 197.
[33]Original move toward democracy occurred with establishment of multiparty system in the constitution of October 1, 1991; however, civil war from 1991 to 2002 derailed democracy until elections could be held in 2002.
[34]Without central government since 1991. (See Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:397.)
[35]First multiracial elections. (See International IDEA, Voter Turnout Database, www.idea.int/vt/.)
[36]Multiparty elections reinstated in 2001 following a coup in 1994.
[37]This transition has been seen as tentative due to corruption. (See Tripp and Walker, *Greenwood Encyclopedia*, 6:471.)
[38]The first multiparty elections were held October 31, 1991, but fraud was suspected.

32 countries that transitioned to democracy in sub-Saharan Africa (including Botswana in 1966 and Mauritius in 1976), 18 use plural majority systems, 11 use proportional representation, and three use a combination of the two. Fifteen countries do not use any type of quotas, and of 17 countries that do use quotas, eight of them are enforced only at the party level. Therefore, although one party may enforce quota limits, others may not. In addition, some constitutional quotas and election law quotas are meager, with Djibouti reserving 10 percent of its seats in parliament for women and Kenya reserving six appointed seats out of 224 parliamentary seats. The vast majority of transitioned or transitioning countries hence rely on restrictive political institutions that place women at a disadvantage.

Given that most women face unfavorable conditions, how much does democratization allow for women's political mobilization? Is it possible for women to overcome barriers to begin to engage the state and gain rights? Moreover, how does the unique situation of sub-Saharan African women affect their mobilization processes? In order to get at these questions, pre- and postdemocratic patterns are explored in the following sections.

WOMEN AND STATE CO-OPTATION

Prior to democratization, most regimes across nations attempted to co-opt women for the purpose of supporting their agenda. Yet, the manner and outcomes of co-optation differed according to historical and political contexts (Viterna and Fallon 2008). In both Eastern Europe and Latin America, for example, regimes attempted to co-opt women through the use of motherhood rhetoric. In both instances, the goal was to confine women's roles and encourage women to support government agendas. However, because the political context differed considerably in both places, outcomes differed. In contrast, in sub-Saharan Africa, motherhood frames were not central to state co-optation attempts. Instead, large state-run women's organizations were created. In comparing patterns found within Eastern Europe and Latin America to those found in sub-Saharan Africa, historical and political contexts that shape mobilization outcomes (or a lack thereof) become apparent. The unique nature of sub-Saharan African women's past negotiations with government actors, the organization of their women's groups, and the political environment of the authoritarian regimes are central features in influencing sub-Saharan African women's actions prior to democratization, as well as with democratization.

Although a burgeoning literature on women and democratization has developed since the 1990s, most of the studies focus on patterns found within East-

ern Europe and Latin America.[1] Within this literature, scholars acknowledge specific differences between countries within each region while also recognizing similar patterns across each region. In Eastern Europe, communist governments expected women to represent mothers of the nation as well as work full time outside the home (Gal and Kligman 2000; Einhorn 1993; Haney 1994; Pascal and Manning 2000; Watson 1993). Actors within these governments attempted to appeal to women through the notion of gender equality, and also by framing women as mothers of their respective nation-states. At the same time, women were restricted from participating in international women's meetings, such as those associated with the Decade for Women declared between 1975 and 1985 (Roman 2001; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998), limiting women's notions of equality to those espoused by their countries. Although women's organizations existed, they were generally not unified and tended to focus on educational and economic concerns (Berthusen Gottlick 1999). Through the tight control of the communist parties, along with the rhetoric used to co-opt women, women were prevented from actively mobilizing as a group prior to democratic transitions (Einhorn 1993).

In Latin America, methods of women's co-optation were similar to those in Eastern Europe in that authoritarian regimes used women to represent mothers of the nation and called on women to care for their families. The motherhood rhetoric created and enforced by the state led women to form small community groups or soup kitchens to act as mothers to the community while also helping women to address their economic concerns (Alvarez 1990; Noonan 1995; Ray and Korteg 1999; Schild 1995). Authoritarian regimes allowed the community groups to form because they fell in line with the governments' agenda and also contributed to economic growth. However, women used the newly created associations to share collective grievances and eventually mobilize against the state. Women further subverted the intentions of the regime by taking action within motherhood frames and demanding an end to the disappearance of citizens, who were also family members (Alvarez 1989; 1990; Chuchryk 1989; Friedman 2000; Okeke-Ihejirika and Franceschet 2002; Ray and Korteg 1999; Sternbach et al. 1992). Women could not care for their families if they had no families to care for. Despite continued torture and disappearance of women, through the use of networks created via community groups many were able to organize, place pressure on the state, and ultimately contribute to the eventual topple of regimes and the development of democratic institutions.

In Eastern Europe and Latin America, the symbol of women as mothers of nations was a framing strategy used by governments to confine women's roles to the home and family life. In Eastern Europe, though, women were also expected

to work full time outside the home, which left little time for them to organize. This was exacerbated by the fact that women's activism was limited to their geographical area and usually within the confines of the government agenda. Women, therefore, did not mobilize against the state. In Latin America, however, women were able to draw upon newly formed organizations to mobilize against authoritarian regimes based on the motherhood rhetoric used by the regimes. Because women were expected to act as mothers and wives, and they could not do so due to the number of disappearances that occurred, women demanded changes from their respective governments and ultimately contributed to transitions to democracy. Despite the fact that regimes in both Eastern Europe and Latin America attempted to co-opt women through symbols of motherhood, the ways in which the co-optation affected women's reactions was dependent on their historical and political context.

Women's patterns of mobilization in sub-Saharan Africa differ considerably from patterns found in Eastern Europe and Latin America because of the region's own historical and political context. To begin, although motherhood is highly respected in sub-Saharan Africa and is commonly used by women for political causes (Amadiume 1995; Clark 2000; Van Allen 2000), regimes generally did not place extra emphasis on motherhood roles, nor did they expect women to stay in the home. Even when women and women's organizations were co-opted under authoritarian regimes to partake in women's activities such as child care and cooking, women were not encouraged to remain in the home, because their economic productivity was needed outside the home (Staudt 1986).[2] Instead of co-optation through motherhood representations, sub-Saharan African women were co-opted by state-run women's organizations. Women's co-optation was successful due to: (1) the general environment created by authoritarianism, (2) women's historical relationship with the state, and (3) the organization of existing women's groups.

First, as discussed in Chapter 2, authoritarian regimes often created very inhospitable environments, where citizens did not feel safe to speak out against the government (Chazan 1991; Drah 1993). Women as well as men, were threatened by political actors, and many learned to keep their distance from the ruling regime. Even in Ghana, considered one of the least tyrannical of authoritarian regimes in sub-Saharan Africa, dissidents were publicly executed and market women were beaten and blamed for unreasonable inflation rates. When women or men attempted to engage in formal politics within such an authoritarian environment, they quickly learned that they would have to appeal to dictators and

their parties. Most citizens thus either changed their political leaning to favor those of the ruling regime or completely disengaged from formal politics.

Second, women's previous interactions with the state contributed to their disengagement from national state structures, allowing for easier co-optation by authoritarian regimes. They had learned to negotiate hostile terrain from prior experiences. Under colonial rule, not only were women excluded from formal political structures, but, in some cases women had attempted to challenge political structures, only to experience severe retribution (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1997; O'Barr and Firmin-Sellers 1995; Wipper 1989). With national independence, sub-Saharan African women were often denied political positions (Chadya 2003; Waylen 1996). Many sub-Saharan African women thus chose to disengage from formal politics and use their existing women's groups to focus on economic, social, and political concerns at the community level (Moran 1989; Tripp 1994). Their historical experiences shaped their decisions within authoritarian regimes.

Third, since women's groups were already present across the continent, authoritarian rulers most likely viewed them as the most effective means to co-opt women. The creation of large state-run women's organizations simply reinforced existing authoritarian patterns. Since resources are often scarce under authoritarianism, offering incentives to women who supported state-run women's organizations allowed for increased co-optation along with support for the military regime (Gyimah-Boadi 1994; Manuh 1993). Women's groups therefore faced the choice of most citizens: either receive resources from the regime by becoming participants in large state-run women's organizations, or quietly operate separately with limited resources. The creation of state-run organizations prevented women from drawing on existing gendered networks to mobilize against the regime, and co-optation efforts by the state, by and large, were successful (Gyimah-Boadi 1994; Manuh 1993; Manuh 2007; Tripp 2003b; Tsikata 1989). Thus, because of the tyrannical nature of authoritarian regimes, negative historical experiences in the realm of politics, and the success of large state-run women's organizations, most women in sub-Saharan Africa did not mobilize against military regimes prior to transitions to democracy.

Even in countries where women were actively involved in either independence or liberation struggles against the state, many were similarly co-opted by their movements. Although certain organizations, such as the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) of Mozambique, promoted the idea of women's equality and argued that they would work toward women's rights and equalities with independence, their actions often did not follow through (Urdang 1995). In South

Africa, the African National Congress (ANC), along with other organizations, argued that racial inequality needed to be the primary concern and that other concerns could potentially fragment the movement (Seidman 1993). Women's political concerns, thus, tended to be sidelined whether under authoritarian regimes or in conflict situations.

Women's experiences prior to democratization, and their negotiations with the state via co-optation attempts affected how they approached the democratization process, depending on their geographic location. Prior to transitions to democracy, mobilization patterns (or a lack thereof) were established among women around the world, and this set the tone as they entered a new era of democratization.

WOMEN'S POSTDEMOCRATIC RESPONSES

Although scholars were initially optimistic about women's formal political participation in democratizing countries within Eastern Europe and Latin America, such hopes were not as apparent among scholars focusing on transitional democratic countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Because of women's high legislative representation in Eastern European countries prior to transitions, scholars were hopeful that this trend would continue with democratization (Einhorn 1993). Similarly, in Latin America, because women managed to successfully mobilize against repressive authoritarian regimes and contribute to the democratization process, scholars were optimistic that women's patterns would continue after an initial transition to democracy (Craske and Molyneux 2002; Fisher 1990; Noonan 1995; Safa 1990). In sub-Saharan Africa, conversely, with the exception of women participating in liberation movements, women's presence was, for the most part, minimal, and great expectations for women's formal political engagement were limited. Optimism for women in Eastern Europe and Latin America, unfortunately, was quickly lost as women in both regions struggled with formal politics within democracies, while in sub-Saharan Africa greater-than-expected gains were made by women across the region. The patterns that emerged were largely explained by women's previous relations with regimes prior to democratization.

In Eastern Europe, women found that the idea of gender equality, as presented by the state, limited their options and choices by forcing them to enter full-time employment while also working as full-time mothers (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2000; Haney 1994; Pascal and Manning 2000; Watson 1993). Because formal employment made demands on their time, many women retreated from it when the transition took place (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2000; Haney

1994; Watson 1993). Women also retreated from the notion of gender equality, which was conflated with the demands made on them through communist rhetoric (Gal and Kligman 2000; Haney 1994; Roman 2001). With the transition to democracy, then, women's formal political participation dropped significantly. In the first post-transition elections, women's representation dropped from 29.5 percent to 6 percent in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, from 20.9 percent to 8.5 percent in Bulgaria, from approximately 50 percent to 9.5 percent in Poland, and from 33 percent to 3.5 percent in Romania (Watson 1993). At the same time, maternity-leave policies were curtailed, women's legislative quotas were dismantled, funding for child-care centers decreased significantly, and attempts to end abortion practices were made (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2000; Haney 1994; Pascal and Manning 2000; Roman 2001; Watson 1993). After democratization, many of the Eastern European states began to resemble the highly masculine makeup of their Western European neighbors.

In Latin America and sub-Sahara Africa, women did not have to contend with the same obstacles. When facing the possibility of democratic transition, women did not enter it with an assumption of gender equality. Although gender equality was, at times, placed at the fore during liberation struggles in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, there were no government or public structures that represented gender equally. Instead, what women in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa had to contend with were transitions made from authoritarian regimes, civil strife, or liberation struggles. Moreover, women in these countries, for the most part, did not have a tradition of democracy, nor did most have democratic neighbors setting examples. They experienced the detrimental effects of colonization followed by authoritarian regimes and civil strife, with few moments of democratic stability.

The primary difference in patterns found across Latin America versus those found across sub-Saharan Africa post-transition is based on women's mobilization patterns prior to and during democratization. In Latin America, because women were able to develop strong movements during the transition period, many were hopeful that women would remain successful in engaging the state after the democratization process. However, the frame of motherhood used by the movement was later used by state officials during transitions to encourage women to return to their homes and carry on their traditional feminine roles (Chinchilla 1994; Fisher 1993; Friedman 1998; Schild 1994). Moreover, the unified force that was created prior to the transition dissipated after the transition, leading to fragmentation between women's groups (Cagan 2000; Chinchilla 1994; Craske 1998; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Ray and Korteg 1999).

In sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, because there were few independent mass women's movements prior to transition, the hope for women's increased political position was low. Certainly, all citizens were hopeful of a more equal society, as well as greater representation, but the cautious optimism present in Latin America was not present in sub-Saharan Africa. Sub-Saharan African women living in countries with large state-run women's organizations prior to transitions often found themselves contending with the same organizations after transitions, further hindering possibilities for women's mobilization. Women involved in liberation struggles also continued to find gendered concerns sidelined. Women in sub-Saharan Africa were, thus, not expected to make tremendous gains with democratization.

In comparison with women in Latin America, however, many women of sub-Saharan Africa had the advantage of a long history of preexisting women's organizations and of participation in existing informal political systems. Informal associations and political structures may provide the means for women to eventually mobilize. As presented in Chapter 2, women drew upon these structures during the colonization process. Unfortunately, during colonization and even with independence, women's movements were usually silenced, and because of this, women often chose to disassociate themselves from formal political issues. With democratization, however, new avenues provide women with opportunities for using existing networks to mobilize and engage the state on gendered issues. Given that patterns and dynamics found in Eastern Europe and Latin America differ greatly from sub-Saharan Africa, how will women's political participation evolve in sub-Saharan Africa? How will women of sub-Saharan Africa mobilize with the transition to democracy, considering that most were silenced around gendered issues prior to democratization? Will outcomes be determined solely by masculine states and political structures that place women at a disadvantage? Or, will women be able to overcome these obstacles by drawing on their existing gendered structures?

GHANA AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

In comparison to Eastern Europe and Latin America, relatively few studies have examined mobilization processes across sub-Saharan Africa during moments of democratic transition. Of the 32 countries in sub-Saharan Africa that have undergone the transition to democracy, 21 have transitioned from authoritarian regimes, five have transitioned from civil strife, and six have transitioned from a combination of civil strife and authoritarianism. The vast majority of

women who live in emerging democratic countries in sub-Saharan Africa have therefore transitioned from authoritarian regimes, and many, no doubt, contend with remnants from the previous regime. Moreover, a minimum of nine countries had to contend with large state-run women's organizations that co-opted women to support the authoritarian government prior to the transition and supported the political party that evolved from the previous regime with democratization.[3]

Women in Ghana faced both of these challenges when the transition to democracy began in 1992. Not only did women confront vestiges of an authoritarian regime and a state-run women's organization, they were also placed at a disadvantage structurally since the electoral system chosen with democratization was plural majority, and no quotas at the national level were implemented. In addition, women in Ghana, along with many women across sub-Saharan Africa, faced their democratic struggles according to the four patterns discussed at the beginning of this chapter. First, since the onset of colonization, women have been excluded from formal politics and they have been repressed under colonial and authoritarian regimes. Second, many Ghanaian women were co-opted by the 31st December Women's Movement during the Provisional National Defense Council rule, and many continued to negotiate the presence of the 31st December Women's Movement with the initial transition in 1992, when Rawlings maintained power. Nonetheless, Ghanaian women, like most sub-Saharan African women, have two patterns working in their favor. First, women have been active within informal political structures and most are aware of the respect and power gained by queenmothers, women chiefs, and other female political figures. Second, women have been active within women's groups for extensive periods of time. Women's groups continue to exist and may play a central role in mobilizing women to engage formal politics. Moreover, if women do organize according to Moran's (1989) notions that only women represent the needs and concerns of other women, then women's groups may work to push toward women's active engagement and participation in formal politics.

As Ghanaian women, along with many other sub-Saharan African women, enter an era of democratization, they must negotiate preestablished patterns instituted under authoritarian regimes while also attempting to confront newly established masculinist democratic structures. With the cards stacked against them, how have women in Ghana begun to engage the state? What has democratization meant to women in Ghana and to women across sub-Saharan Africa?

CHAPTER FOUR

The Iron Fist

In Kenya, mothers of political prisoners went to the attorney general in 1992 to have him review their sons' cases. They argued that their sons were simply advocating for a multiparty system, which was legal in 1991. Through the media, many of the women had learned about hunger strikes and about distributing pamphlets to bring attention to their cause. They did both. On March 2, the mothers, along with supporters, began to demonstrate in a public park against the government. This demonstration continued on March 3, but on that day, the police began to beat the women (Tibbetts 1994).

The brutal remnants of authoritarian regimes during democratization processes pose a real threat to Africans. Africans in many countries experience severe hardships as well as persecution under authoritarian rule, and with democratization, the memories linger. In light of the threat of violence against women's political actions, women's responses in the early period of democratization were understandably limited. In Kenya, women only began to become more active in formal politics when Section 2a of the constitution allowed for the existence of multiparty elections (Nzomo 1998). In Cameroon, the government dissolved a women's organization that attempted to organize a pro-democracy strike, and more autonomous organizations only began to emerge with the passing of an amendment in 1990 that allowed for the freedom of association (Adams 2003). In Zambia, after an amendment was passed to allow for multiparty elections, the Women's Lobby, which formed to encourage women to become involved in formal politics, was denounced by the president of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), and the Movement threatened to expel party members associated with the Lobby (Geisler 1995).

In Ghana, women faced similar setbacks. In the first election in 1992, women's organizations were not visibly involved in mobilizing women to vote, nor did they encourage women to stand for political positions. Even as civic associations, such as the Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC) and the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS), gathered momentum to place pressure on Rawlings and the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) to make the transition to democracy, women's organizations were neither present nor vocal. This is not to say that no women were involved, since the GTUC and the NUGS included women. However, given the large presence of women's organizations within Ghana, their absence from this process appears unusual. Members of women's organizations did not start to actively engage in the formal political process until 1996. Inaction by women's organizations was often tied to the fear created under Rawlings's regime.

The remnants of the authoritarian regime and the continued presence of the 31st December Women's Movement neutralized the larger gendered system of autonomous women's organizations. Women's experience under the authoritarian regime affected their participation in the democratization process. In this chapter, women's slow and cautious participation in the transition to democracy in Ghana is explored. In particular, the role of women's previous experiences under authoritarian regimes, women's access (or lack thereof) to resources, and trust between and within autonomous women's organizations are examined.

AUTHORITARIAN CONTROL

Under the PNDC, Rawlings attempted to co-opt women to support his regime, while also creating a state of fear that would prevent opposition from citizens. When members of women's organizations spoke with me about politics in relation to the transition to democracy, two primary themes emerged: (1) violence and (2) the role of the 31st December Women's movement. Fear of the regime is understandable considering the violence tied to Rawlings's succession to power. Rawlings targeted specific political and intellectual individuals and nationally broadcast their executions, which was meant to deter other individuals from following similar paths. These actions created and enforced the culture of silence in which citizens quickly learned not to speak out against Rawlings and the PNDC (Chazan 1991). Some women in Ghana were considered enemies of the state, which was reflected in the interviews. One woman explained:

> *It is difficult to have politics in this country at times, because normally, the government in power tries to victimize. You know, and that's the case everywhere in Africa, they try*

to victimize people. So, they think that being in politics makes you be against the government, which is more violence against them. (November 13, 1997, A)

This woman explained in a matter-of-fact manner that individuals who become involved in political issues all across Africa risk retribution. She elaborated that many women were aware of this and therefore chose not to address political issues—even nonpartisan ones. With the transition to democracy, the residual fear engendered by the authoritarian period remains, and one respondent summed up the general feeling quite well:

The democratization process is also based on a legacy of years under a military regime. Politics has had a certain level of violence that isn't present in other countries. This has made people wary of politics. There is a certain level of intolerance of politics . . . NGOs [non-governmental organizations] are supposed to be nonpolitical. Many women's NGOs choose to avoid [politics] and work on income-generating activities. That way they stay out of trouble. (June 11, 1999)

This women's organization member clearly linked the authoritarian regime to the democratization process and believed that the combination of the two had limited women's opportunities. She claimed that members of women's organizations chose to explicitly stay out of politics in order to avoid any possibility of violence, as women had done under the authoritarian regime. Another respondent from a different organization concurred:

As far as the government is concerned, if you are not [explicitly] supporting them, then you are illegitimate. So, in order for you to be legitimate and not be labeled, then you should stay out of politics. (November 13, 1997, B)

Although this member made this comment after the second multiparty elections, she still acknowledged the power the government maintained. She suggested that anyone who appeared to question the government or not show adequate support of the government faced consequences. The government co-opted citizens to support their agenda through the use of fear. The respondent explained how this fear posed problems to organizations trying to implement certain programs, since the government might attempt to halt the programs. Because of this situation, many women chose not to become involved in political issues.

These responses help to explain why women's organizations were not involved in the immediate transition to democracy in 1992. Women did not want to contend with possible retribution from the state and thus attempted to avoid the state all together. Any engagement in activities that could be seen as political, even if

nonpartisan, could be viewed as a threat. Some individuals who attempted to challenge Rawlings's government or who addressed political issues were executed or imprisoned. Market women had been specifically targeted by the regime, and this further repressed women's actions. Women, therefore, fell back on the culture of silence and attempted to maintain distance from any issues that appeared political in nature. This included women's rights. As the above member explained, "Taking up women's causes is a political act . . . So maybe that is where there is some difficulty" (November 13, 1997, B). If women wanted to improve their social or political rights, they would have to challenge the government, and this posed a risk. To remain safe and not experience any interference from the state, women's organizations chose to continue to focus on income-generating activities. Ultimately, the legacy of repression created under the military regime hindered women from becoming involved in political issues.

In addition to the general political environment created by the PNDC, women also had to contend with the 31st December Women's Movement. Under the authoritarian regime and continuing with the transition to democracy, the 31st December Women's Movement attempted to intimidate and monitor the activities of other women's organizations and it had an advantage over other organizations in terms of funding. One respondent who explained the general political environment also stated:

> *When we talk about women's NGOs [non-governmental organizations], we also have to talk about a lack of a women's movement, and the dominance of a particular organization. They have been around longer, and have more access to resources. This closes the space for many women's organizations. (June 11, 1999)*

She spoke of the dominance of the 31st December Women's Movement in Ghana, and how this organization, through its resources and overarching structure throughout Ghana, closed off opportunities for women's organizations to address political issues. Interestingly, even during this interview, which took place nearly seven years after the first multiparty election, the respondent did not refer to the organization by name. This is no doubt related to the violence that accompanied politics in the past and the need for the respondent to protect herself.

Numerous respondents also spoke about the means by which the 31st December Women's Movement attempted to intimidate other organizations. Particularly, they spoke of the connection the organization had with the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD), which was used to control the activities of women's organizations. The NCWD is a government branch with which members of women's organizations may register to attend meetings and

form networks with other women's organizations. The NCWD came under the control of the PNDC in 1987 when its members were dismissed and new employees were appointed by Rawlings (Manuh 1993). Since then, it has been considered an apparatus of the state, maintaining control of women's organizations. One respondent emphatically spoke about the problems with the 31st December Women's Movement:

> *[The 31st December Women's Movement] is not an NGO, from my personal perspective. It's a wing of the ruling government, a women's wing . . . And, as a result, they have an upper hand in all other women's groups . . . Even the NCWD executive secretary is appointed by the first lady, and yet, [the first lady] says she's an NGO. How can an NGO appoint a government [official] and represent the interests of the other women's groups? It's not an NGO, it's part of government. And it's stifled several other women's groups, they've done things against them. (November 4, 1997)*

During this interview, the respondent spoke with anger. She strongly believed that the 31st December Women's Movement made it difficult for other women's organizations to take up any activities that were political. If women's organizations were to try to address any issues that may be viewed as a threat to the government, the 31st December Women's Movement or the NCWD, would attempt to prevent the programs from being implemented. A woman in a different organization also discussed the dominance of the 31st December Women's Movement, the connection it had with the NCWD, and how her organization was threatened by the NCWD:

> *The women's issues in this country are governed and dominated by the 31st December Women's Movement. And they feel that if you are not a part of them, then you are a threat to them. So, I can only say that [our organization] is not one of the organizations that is very well liked by the government people . . . So, for instance once they [representatives of the state] called us to the office of the Chairman of the NCWD, called us for a meeting in 1995, and [they said] . . . "we haven't heard anything," that we weren't registered with the government. We were not a group that was required to register. And, they said, "you can't do that," forcing us to register just so they knew what we were doing . . . all they want to do is to get our organization there, and then we become useless. (November 13, 1997)*

The impact of the NCWD on women's organizations was most apparent to me as I interviewed one woman who spoke positively about the NCWD. Since I found this unusual, I probed her for more information, and the following transpired:

INTERVIEWER So, do you think the NCWD is positive in that?

RESPONDENT Oh, what can I say? It is more or less. I can't say much about it. [She tapers off and begins to laugh nervously.]

INTERVIEWER Why do you say more or less?

RESPONDENT Maybe some people may. [She stops in mid-sentence, and begins again with a nervous laugh.]

INTERVIEWER No, please tell me.

RESPONDENT Well, formerly, we were having one woman [from the NCWD] who was interested in [our organization]—so, if they can come and learn more about it [our organization]—but I can't say much about NCWD on the side of [our organization].

INTERVIEWER Do you think it's tied to the state?

RESPONDENT Well . . . [Respondent looks at the tape recorder, and I turn it off.]

(October 20, 1997)

When I turned off the tape, the respondent told me that she was certain that I could find some individuals who would discuss the role of the NCWD with me, but that she was not going to discuss it. She went on to tell me that she did not want to answer any questions that were related to the state. Her reluctance to talk to me about the state was most likely tied to her own experiences under the military regime. She did not want to place herself in danger. I respected her wishes and changed the topic.

This segment demonstrates how fear still played out in these women's lives, even though the state was moving away from an authoritarian regime. It also demonstrates how the state, with the transition, was still attempting to monitor and co-opt women's autonomous organizations. The above respondent spoke of a representative from the NCWD attempting to monitor the activities of her organization, and this obviously created tension for her and for other members. This may explain why she spoke positively about the NCWD in the beginning of the interview. Because she had already had problems with the NCWD, she did not want additional problems, and she wanted to appear as if she supported the role of the NCWD and other government organizations.

Each of the three women interviewed above came from different organizations, yet they all had similar experiences. Although they may have responded differently to the 31st December Women's Movement and the NCWD, they all received a similar message. They understood that if their organization became involved in certain issues that were not supported by the government or by the 31st December Women's Movement, then their organization would be subject to in-

terference. Therefore, it is not surprising that many women's organizations did not become actively involved in nonpartisan political issues with the initial transition to democracy in 1992. Any political openings offered to women were tempered with intimidation and the possibility of retribution and violence. Fears that were instilled during the authoritarian regimes remained, and the 31st December Women's Movement, along with the NCWD, severely inhibited women's organizations from becoming involved in political issues.

Coupled with this fear was the advantage the 31st December Women's Movement had in terms of funding. Because it had more access to funding, it could achieve more and closed off space to autonomous women's organizations that did not have access to the same amount of resources. One woman spoke of the resources the 31st December Women's Movement had and how these resources were used to their advantage:

> *You see, it hasn't come out to fully declare its identity, and yet, it's so obvious that they are a political group. And that is what makes a few of us a bit unhappy about the activities there. What it means is that if you are a political group posed as an NGO, you're going to receive massive support from the government to do all your work, and what about the rest of us? And, if that is the case, it also means that you are going to go under the guise of an NGO to win support . . . for the ruling party. So, some of these things really put a lot of us off. (June 7, 1999)*

Another member of a different organization clearly explained some of the principle objections against the 31st December Women's Movement:

> *[The 31st December Women's Movement does pose a threat to other women's organizations] in the way that it organizes itself. It's complicated in nature. Sometimes it's an NGO, sometimes it is a revolutionary organization, and sometimes it is seen as the women's wing of the NDC. It's not quite an NGO, but says it is, which is quite problematic. It can receive outside support. It is also used to speak for women in this country . . . We also can't overlook the fact that the head of the December Women's Movement is the wife of the head of state. It has tentacles within the political structure and yet claims to be an NGO. It occupies too much space. (June 11, 1999)*

Because of its ties to the state, the 31st December Women's Movement had access to state funds. At the same time, it claimed to be an NGO, which allowed the organization to have access to donor funds. This also made the funding situation more difficult for autonomous women's NGOs. Many members of women's organizations believed that this setup placed them at a disadvantage and that donor

agencies were only contributing to the problem. One woman discussing this problem explained:

> *The 31st December Women's Movement is a threat to other women's NGOs . . . Women's organizations aren't funded and women's organizations collapse because of the 31st December Women's Movement. It is more politically motivated. Why haven't funding agencies even questioned their name? (June 15, 1999)*

With frustration, this respondent pointed out that the name of the organization incorporated the date that Rawlings came to power. The organization, as suggested by one the respondents, is, in reality, a revolutionary organization[1] working to garner women's support for the state. However, because it is such a large organization that has implemented numerous projects throughout Ghana, and because it claims to be an NGO, it still manages to receive international donor funding. Members of women's organizations argued that this hindered their own access to funding. Not only did they have to contend with remnants of the authoritarian regime and the 31st December Women's Movement, they also had to compete with the 31st December Women's Movement, along with other organizations, in order to receive funding to maintain their activities and goals. The legacy of authoritarianism worked alongside women's access to resources in determining women's political mobilization patterns.

CLAMORING FOR MONEY

The funding concerns of members of autonomous women's organizations are certainly legitimate to some degree. The 31st December Women's Movements did receive funds from various donor agencies to carry out projects. The African Development Bank provided a large loan to the 31st December Women's Movement in order to strengthen the NCWD. In this instance, the connection between the different organizations and the use of the funds may be viewed as problematic. In other instances, donor agencies, such as the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), offered limited support to the 31st December Women's Movement for activities such as studying rain-harvesting systems. Some donor agencies, however, such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), have specifically stated that they would not provide financial support to the 31st December Women's Movement or other similar political organizations. Therefore, although some funding agencies continue to support the 31st December

Women's Movement, other agencies clearly recognize its role and refuse to offer monetary support.

Given the confusing funding policies, finances were definitely of concern to members of women's organizations I interviewed. All women complained of not having enough support, particularly for addressing nonpartisan political issues. They explained that they could not achieve much because their resources were limited, and they could not gain access to funding. They specifically needed resources to run their programs or continue with their activities. Many of them spoke about how difficult it was simply to keep their organizations running. One woman explained how the lack of funding made it difficult to keep branches of her organization running in different regions of Ghana:

> *You see, our problem is—because of financial restraints we have activities in the regions, but it's on volunteer basis. (October 21, 1997)*

This organization had the funding to keep its office in Accra running, but its offices in other regions were dependent primarily on volunteer efforts. Most of the women's organizations are based on volunteering, since many do not have the funding to support their organizations. Another woman similarly stated:

> *In fact, our problem is resources. You see, we don't have adequate funding. We do not have enough funding to be able to employ permanent staff to run the center. So, everything is done on a voluntary basis. (May 11, 1998)*

In many instances it is the dedication of the women that keeps their organizations running. Considering women find it difficult to maintain the structure and strength of their organization, the fact that some women's organizations do not survive is not surprising. Even among organizations that continue, many experience constraints in implementing their programs and activities. One woman described the problematic situation of her organization:

> *Maybe four months, if we get time, then we go and do one [workshop on women's formal political participation within a local community.] Maybe three months after that, or four months, to get funding. But this year, we haven't been able to get any funding. We are unable to do anything. (November 4, 1997)*

Another women from a different organization explained a similar situation her organization was facing:

> *So, if we get a new donor, we will go again. No matter how many times—we'll do it, anytime that we get it. But, we haven't got money . . . We had wanted to go to all the*

regions in Ghana, but we didn't have funds for it . . . Every time we get the help of someone, we will do it, it's our work, that's where we are needed, we will do it. We are prepared, we are prepared to go to any length so that we can help our people. (October 20, 1997)

This woman's comments demonstrated the general difficulties that women faced. They attempted to pursue different donors yet were unsuccessful. At the same time, this woman, along with many other women, had strong resolve. The issues that her organization addressed were important to her, and she was determined to find funding in order to continue to carry them out.

An examination of funding policies of all major donors shows that the women quoted had valid concerns. There were some smaller donor organizations that focused on nonpartisan political issues, such as the Hanns Seidel Stiftung, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, and the Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (Netherlands Development Organization). However, the vast majority were only beginning to give funds to organizations dealing with nonpartisan issues in 1997. One CIDA employee told me that "most donor agencies are project focused. Only in the last two years have we [donor agencies in general] begun to support women in advocacy because funding agencies had to prove outcomes" (May 25, 1999). Most donor agencies need to indicate the success level of their programs through empirical impact criteria, demonstrating how their financial support leads to clear and evident changes. Outcomes are then parlayed to respective governments and used to demonstrate how donor projects contribute to economic development and to seek additional finances to continue future projects. Offering support to women focusing on advocacy issues or for women's organizations that encourage women to participate in politics is problematic for these agencies because measuring their success is difficult.

Donor agencies also only recently began to develop programs that focused on good-governance issues. At USAID, although there was a good-governance and democracy funding section in 1994, its primary goal was purchasing commodities for elections. The money was spent on ballot boxes, fuel, ink, voting stands, and the like. However, in 1996, there was money left over, which was then allocated for funding organizations that promoted good governance. Like CIDA, USAID also only began to fund organizations after 1996.

The other problem of funding is related to the transitional democratic state of Ghana, which suggests political instability. A different CIDA employee provided this as an additional explanation for why nonpartisan women's organizations may not be receiving funding:

We can fund women's NGOs that deal with political activities. They would fall under the good-governance fund. However, if there are any ties to 31st December Women's Movement, then they won't be funded. This may be why we [donor agencies more generally] don't want to fund these women's organizations. When you touch these issues, it brings suspicion. CIDA is worried about party favoritism, so we would not fund organizations that might do this. We would fund voting issues, but the organizations would have to reconstruct their projects so they do not directly deal with political issues such as party issues. (May 12, 1999)

This sentiment was reiterated by the previous CIDA employee: "In relation to politics, every donor wants to remain neutral. You want to play it safe. You don't want to interfere with the internal affairs of the country. Some play it safe by not supporting advocacy—even at the local level" (May 25, 1999). An employee at USAID took a similar position: "We have to take a nonpartisan stance. We would shy away from groups that are overtly connected to any particular party. My office certainly wouldn't give a grant to the 31st December Women's Movement. They're just joined at the hip with the ruling party. Just as we wouldn't give one to the women's wing of the NPP [New Patriotic Party] . . . So, we really strive to be very nonpartisan" (May 28, 1999).

All of these employees, along with an employee from the British Council, described the complexities that donor agencies face. They must decide who they will fund, whether the organizations are nonpartisan NGOs, and whether they will be able to measure outcomes of their projects. Because political issues could be volatile in Ghana, particularly directly after the transition to democracy, many donor agencies shied away from funding projects that may have created conflict. In addition, political issues were certainly sensitive for many of the donor agencies. They did not want to support political parties, and if women's organizations were interested in addressing nonpartisan political issues, the agencies would have to discern whether they were actually nonpartisan NGOs or whether they were political parties acting covertly. For these reasons, along with the fact that most donor agencies did not begin to address nonpartisan political issues and advocacy issues until around 1997, women's organizations found it difficult to come by funding for their projects.

Under their operating guidelines, most donor agencies provided only limited funding to women's organizations in the late 1990s. Two out of 20 programs under CIDA's good-governance and civil society program in Ghana were slotted for women's organizations. At USAID, the funds that went to women's organizations tended to go to issues of legal aid, working to eradicate trokosi (a type of ritual

servitude in which a family gives a girl child to a traditional priest in order to atone for family ancestral sins),[2] and strengthening of business associations. Similarly, most of the British Council's funds went to "well-educated and articulated" NGOs and focused on trokosi, domestic violence, and literacy programs. The representative for the European Union suggested that, although they addressed women's rights through human rights, their main focus was on health issues related to women. A representative from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) also explained that they focused primarily on health issues and did not address or fund programs falling into the good-governance category.

Although some of the projects listed above could be deemed as political, such as the legal aid programs or addressing problems of trokosi and domestic violence, none of the programs specifically focused on encouraging women to engage formal politics. For example, when I asked a representative of DANIDA what Ghanaian organizations were funded for the good-governance, human rights, and democracy program, the response was:

> *One is International Needs, that is the trokosi system, I don't remember the name of it. It is under the trokosi system. Then we have the Institute of Economic Affairs that we are supporting to carry on a level of policy issues, policy status, and then discussions on topical issues on governance, economic issues, things that are coming up with this. Then, we have the . . . Center for Democratic Development. (May 20, 1999)*

Again, the issue of trokosi was mentioned as the focus for women's concerns. The other two Ghanaian organizations mentioned were run primarily by men, and at that point in time neither organization emphasized gender. Interestingly, the representative of USAID also mentioned they were providing support for the Center for Democratic Development. Most donor agencies did not appear to view women's organizations as directly taking on formal politics. Instead, as in the past, the domain of formal politics was, for the most part, left to men. When I asked the DANIDA representative if any women's organizations received such funding, the types of activities the representative responded with were not specific to women and democratization: "Well, there are some that are related to . . . economic activities . . . and credit support . . . Then, also, we have support to some organizations that are dealing with, that are teaching or conducting research into violence against women" (May 20, 1999). He began by focusing on income-generating activities, and then he moved to domestic violence, which is also supported by other donor agencies. Although DANIDA addressed women's concerns in other ways, they, like other primary donor agencies, were not focusing on encouraging women to engage formal politics. And, when asked if they

would support women's organizations that focused on nonpartisan issues, the representative responded by stating: "We wouldn't have any serious problems with a proposal like this, given that it is well-packaged, and all the objectives are quite concise, the methodologies are quite practical, and then, of course, the outcomes could be easily obtainable and measurable" (May 20, 1999). In this instance, as with other donor agencies, it comes back to measurability. Because it is difficult to measure the success rate of women encouraging women to participate in formal politics, these types of activities are not often funded. The main factors hindering women's organizations that focus on nonpartisan political issues from gaining access to funding are problems of measurement of outcomes, demonstrating clear nonpartisan intentions, and simple access to funding, which has only started to become available in 1997 to civic associations focusing on good-governance issues. The members of women's organizations that complained about funding did so with reason.

Although members of women's organizations were interested in addressing issues related to the formal political sphere, they found it difficult to find the resources to do so. Their organizations were often run based on committed members volunteering time, and usually their funding only allowed them to continue running their offices. The funding that members of women's organizations did receive from donor agencies was very specific and often related to women's human rights, and although these issues are important and may be viewed as political to some degree, they still did not help women engage formal political processes. The good-governance funding from donor agencies that did address political institutions generally went to male-dominated organizations such as the Institute of Economic Affairs and the Center for Democratic Development. Perhaps unintentionally, donor agencies cut off resources to women's organizations interested in engaging democratic institutions and structures and helped to reinforce women's absence from formal politics.

The general political environment created by the PNDC and the limited access to funding were the primary hindrances women's organizations faced in becoming politically involved in the democratization process from the beginning. However, women also struggled with divisions among and between their organizations, divisions which were in part tied to the political environment and funding situation.

DIVIDING THE SPOILS

Most likely the environment created under the authoritarian regime and the competition for access to donor agency funds led women to feel the need to pro-

tect their own interests. Instead of using the preexisting gendered structures to form coalitions and engage the government, members of women's organizations often spoke of working in small enclaves in order to safeguard their resources. Most respondents spoke of the inability of organizations to work together. One woman explained:

> *I think we could do better, women's groups could work together better. I believe sometimes it's a rivalry as well. I wish that wouldn't be the case, but everybody believes that, you know, this is our area. (May 21, 1999)*

Another woman of the same organization echoed this by stating:

> *Sometimes it looks like some members have their own individual fiefdoms. (May 21, 1999)*

Both of these women indicate that members of women's organizations are quick to protect their own organizations and the interests that adhere to them. Because of this, they are not likely to share information or resources with other organizations. A woman from a different organization aptly described this situation:

> *I know women want to work in small, small enclaves because people want to protect their interests, and if they organize all these groups, maybe this other group, its women will be forgotten. That's how everybody wants to protect their positions. (November 4, 1997)*

An additional woman from a separate organization supported these claims by stating:

> *My experience has been that women's groups tend to see themselves as small islands. And there is a problem with networking. (June 7, 1999)*

Although the women do not directly address the issue, part of the need to protect their organizations and their limited resources probably began under the authoritarian regime when trust between individuals was limited. As seen in the reactions of the women to the residuals of that regime, there was a need to present the activities of their organization carefully and protect their organization and activities from state incursions. Although the state's power was waning, its ability to threaten women's organizations still existed.

And as discussed, with the transition, when organizations were working on similar issues, they were often competing against each other for financial resources. One member explained the difficulty the president of her organization faced:

As is the case in this country, you go apply for funding and people are always pushing you—pushing you back. Or they will take your ideas and use them somewhere else, or just push you out. She's had a hard time, which is very sad. (May 24, 1999)

The president of this organization felt that the donor agencies were not listening to her ideas and also that her ideas were being taken and used by members of other women's organizations. This led her to become more protective of her organization and its goals and activities. In most social movements there are elements of protectionism, with the need to guard resources. This is not particular to Ghana. Yet, the environment created by the authoritarian regime combined with the competitive nature of donor agencies no doubt exacerbated the need for women's organizations to work separately and protect their resources.

Along with these divisions between organizations, members also had to contend with internal divisions within their organizations. For the most part, the internal divisions appeared to be minor. Although some members briefly spoke with me about divisions based on political parties, most members dismissed this. The majority of those that did discuss it were from the same organization, one in which the president was also a government representative. This created conflict because some members believed that the president was not always able to separate the agenda of the organization from the agenda of the state. Other members, however, believed that the president's position enhanced organizational activities and that members were able to achieve more due to its ties to the state. This president's term was two years, and once she stepped down, the controversy of political parties subsided.

Interestingly, one division within organizations that was mentioned often was not ethnicity, as one might expect, but rather age. As will be discussed in the next chapter, most respondents did not find ethnicity to be problematic, and some found multiethnicity to be a strength within an organization.[3] However, many respondents, and particularly the younger members, found age relations to be extremely problematic. One woman summarized the situation by saying:

[T]he issue of age is a problem, I think, in the whole of Ghana. I mean, the younger you are the more you're expected to be submissive. So, yes, that is a problem My experience has been that the older women tend to find it hard to defer to the younger women. (June 7, 1999)

Some younger women I spoke with thought that they were the only ones to experience this discrimination. They believed that it was only occurring within their organization. However, as they began to speak with other women, they realized

that it was not specific to their organization, nor was it to specific to Ghana. As one women explained:

> *Sometimes, you just think, "Oh, this is what happens only in [my organization] here in Ghana." But then, from general discussions, particularly for the younger ones, there was a similar attitude in . . . Swaziland or Tanzania or wherever it was. They also voiced a similar . . . feeling of offense. (May 21, 1999)*

The younger women found themselves stifled within some organizations because they were not given respect and were not appointed to decision-making positions. Another woman from the same organization discussed this difficulty:

> *The older ones never want to give up, or, never want to give opportunities to younger ones, even though they should realize that, at the end of the day, we are going to take up the mantle. (May 21, 1999)*

Organizational divisions based on age were great enough to elicit a direct response from many younger members who are now opting out of some organizations and beginning their own. As one young woman described:

> *The way it's now going to be overcome is most of us young ones are getting into new organizations. We are starting up our own, trying to build up our own, just because . . . they don't want to budge, and it's going to take a long time to get over that, because most of these women that we're talking about are forties, fifty. So, they still have a long way to go. (June 1, 1999)*

Most likely, the women from older generations made great strides in gaining their positions, and they were not prepared to relinquish the prestige or resources that accompanied them. The struggle between the older and younger generation was a struggle for resources within organizations, as well as a struggle for influential positions. This was further compounded by the fact that, in Ghana, age is considered to reflect an individual's knowledge. Older women consequently demanded respect, sometimes to the detriment of younger women. Younger members recognized that if they wanted to actively work to address women's issues, they needed to have the autonomy to do so. Many of them therefore chose to leave organizations that were in the hands of the older generation. The division of age ultimately excluded some younger members from participating or led to fragmentation of established organizations.

The new culture of politics Ghanaian women faced in the transition to democracy was informed by their experience under the authoritarian regime. Prior to

and during the transition, many women's organizations were co-opted by the 31st December Women's Movement or by the government, and often the co-optation was gained through intimidation. Because of women's past experiences, political opportunities remained closed for them, and most chose not to be involved with the democratization process in 1992 for fear of retribution. Those that did become involved in nonpartisan political issues after the first flawed elections still needed to tread lightly when pursuing their activities, since their organizations were monitored and received threats. Women's limited participation in formal politics under the authoritarian regime, combined with the fear and intimidation created by the government during the transition, restricted activities of autonomous women's organizations and led many to maintain a distance from political issues. Most women therefore chose to continue to focus on relatively safe income-generating activities.

The environment of fear was coupled with the lack of resources available to autonomous women's organizations. The 31st December Women's Movement not only intimidated organizations that posed a threat to them or to the government, they also had access to government and donor funding, which allowed them to implement programs across the nation. This made it difficult for autonomous women's organizations to compete with the 31st December Women's Movement and to engage political issues, even nonpartisan issues. In addition, numerous donor agencies did not begin to fund non-governmental organizations focusing on nonpartisan political issues until well after the first elections in 1992. Therefore, women's groups interested in encouraging women to become involved in the formal political process were significantly limited in scope. Many women's organizations did not have access to funds, and when they did, the funds were available on a short-term basis and rarely would sustain long-term activities. Indeed, most donors continued to focus on income-generating activities, and when they broadened their focus it was only to include some aspects of women's human rights, such as reducing the practice of trokosi or domestic violence. Most funding for issues of good-governance in Ghana was just beginning in 1997 and often did not include women's organizations. Women's interests in furthering women's formal political participation were thus curtailed by the programs of the donor agencies.

Both the limited access to funding and fear created from the authoritarian regime helped to create a divisive environment among women's organizations. Although the preexisting gendered structures could have provided the networks necessary to mobilize women with the transition to democracy, co-optation, fear, intimidation, and competition for funding prevented women from forming coali-

tions to confront the government on issues concerning women. Many organizations neither formed coalitions nor worked together on similar projects because they remained protective about their topics of interest and their activities. They wanted to continue to guard their limited resources as they had under the authoritarian regime. These debilitating factors were further exacerbated by tensions created within organizations. Divisions along age lines made some younger members feel excluded from their organizations and led others to leave organizations and form their own. This ultimately increased conflict within organizations and led to increased competition between organizations.

Given the barriers that women had to contend with in Ghana, their lag in response to the democratization process is not surprising. Similar outcomes may be found in other sub-Saharan African countries due to similar donor policies and state-run women's organizations. The good-governance funding was put in place by donor agencies at the same time across sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, autonomous organizations in other sub-Saharan African countries would most likely experience patterns like Ghana's.

In Nigeria, for example, women's autonomous organizations focused on income-generating activities in the 1970s and 1980s when they faced economic crises, and they were co-opted by women's state-run organizations under authoritarian regimes in the 1980s and 1990s (Okeke-Ihejirika and Franceschet 2002). In the transition to democracy, the civilian government maintained elements of the state-run women's organization and allowed the new first lady to act as head of the organization. Although some autonomous organizations, such as Women in Nigeria (WIN), attempted to challenge the state, their limited resources and the continued presence of the larger state-run organization prevented them from successfully mobilizing women to challenge the government and address women's concerns. In Kenya, the MYWO was co-opted by the Kenyan African National Union (KANU) government in 1986 and continued its pro-government stance with the transition to democracy (House-Midamba 1996). Wangari Maathai, the leader of the Kenyan autonomous women's group the Green Belt Movement (GBM) was one of the few people who, along with her organization, challenged the government. Maathai often achieved her success by drawing international attention to her group's struggle. Otherwise, resources for her and other autonomous women's organizations were limited. Her activism also came with a price. She was severely beaten by government police, and for two months in 1993, she had to go into hiding due to death threats from the government. Because of this type of intimidation by the government, limited resources, and government co-optation, many women in Kenya chose to remain apolitical. As in Ghana, the lack

of resources combined with political structures used to intimidate and co-opt women would help to explain women's inability to draw upon pre-existing gendered structures that could mobilize women to become politically involved during the initial transition to democracy.

Despite all of the hindrances that women faced, many across sub-Saharan Africa were able to mobilize and started to actively engage formal political structures. How did women overcome obstacles? What factors led to women's increased political participation? In the next chapter, the means by which women's organizations in Ghana surmounted barriers to mobilize other women to participate in formal politics are explored. Specifically, the factors that led women to move away from their fear of the state, to view democratization as a unique opportunity that they must seize, and to encourage the mobilization of other women are examined.

CHAPTER FIVE

Capturing Democracy

> In 2002, the courage, resilience, patience and commitment of members of the Green Belt Movement, other civil society organizations, and the Kenyan public culminated in the peaceful transition to a democratic government and laid the foundation for a more stable society.
>
> *Wangari Maathai, December 10, 2004*

In 2004, Wangari Maathai was the first African woman awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in sustainable development, democracy, and peace. In Kenya, she gained the reputation as a champion against rights abuses as she led the Green Belt Movement in addressing sustainable development and then democratization. She was one of the main actors who questioned the Kenyan government, and she was arrested and beaten on several occasions, which only strengthened her resolve. Maathai represents the determination of women working across sub-Saharan Africa to create a change with democratization.

With transitions to democracy, many women's organizations in African countries now view the formal political process as a means to change their economic, social, and political situation. In Malawi, nonpartisan women's organizations formed to influence the rewriting of their constitutions (Tripp 2001b). In Zambia, alliances among women's organizations and lobby groups fought to get more women into government positions (Geisler 1995). Urban women in Tanzania began working across ethnic, age, and religious lines for political purposes (Tripp 1994). The number of women's organizations grew so rapidly that the Tanzania Gender Networking Program developed to provide a forum for women's organizations to share their progress, ideas, and outcomes.

Women's organizations in Ghana are taking similar actions. During the 1996 election year, the International Association for the Advancement of Women in Africa (ASAWA) and the United Women's Front (UNIWAF) held democratization workshops throughout Ghana to educate women on voting procedures, the importance of voting, the role of women in politics, and the different political par-

ties. FIDA and Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) traveled around Ghana informing women of their right to vote in the elections. FIDA also lobbied the government on gender-related issues such as the practice of trokosi and female genital cutting. At the same time, a number of religious women's organizations, educational women's organizations, and small community organizations incorporated aspects of the formal political process into their agenda. Leaders of the organizations spoke to their members about the importance of voting and expressing their economic and political concerns by participating in the electoral process.

Despite the hindrances women originally faced with the transition to democracy, the democratization process created the political opportunity needed for women to slowly take advantage of it. As the control of the authoritarian regime dissipated, women realized that they could become more active with little retribution. In addition, once funding began to be focused on good-governance programs in the mid to late 1990s, members of women's organizations were able to increase their activities, as well as their visibility. These changes allowed women to concentrate on elections as a site to engage the state in addressing women's concerns.

Women's gradual mobilization in Ghana took off when more than 30 women were sexually assaulted and murdered by a serial killer between 1997 and 2000, creating an urgency for members of women's organizations to draw upon both new political structures and familiar gendered structures. Their actions were made possible in part by three salient changes that had taken place since the transition to democracy. First, members of women's organizations realized that the change in the government and the openness of the democratic environment afforded them with the opportunity to confront issues they normally would have avoided. Second, they recognized the importance of bringing women into formal politics for the purpose of representation, as well as to address concerns directly affecting women. Specifically, they focused on the idea that only women could effectively represent the needs and concerns of women. Third, members of women's organizations knew they could not achieve their goals without the support of the female population and concentrated on mobilizing women to engage formal politics. Their mobilization was dependent on their success in framing their collective identity, as well as on the resources available to them. Ultimately, the need for mobilization crystallized because of the serial killings. The state's apathetic response sparked the movement, which reached its height during the 2000 presidential elections.

THE OPPORTUNITY OF DEMOCRACY

Although most women still felt the lingering threat remaining from Ghana's authoritarian regime, they recognized the change in the general political and social environment with the decline of the 31st December Women's Movement and with opposition members speaking freely against President Rawlings with minimal repercussions. Supreme Court justices were challenging Rawlings, as were reporters and outspoken political candidates. Although there were threats against the justices, and newspaper publishers and political parties were intimidated, the repercussions were not as severe as they had been under the authoritarian regime. Moreover, the publishing of incendiary articles in national newspapers often bore little to no consequences from the government. Members of women's organizations recognized that they may be able to address nonpartisan political issues with minimal retribution. They started with smaller projects and slowly became bolder in their activities. One woman explained how members of women's organizations were taking advantage of the democracy simply through their existence:

> *In terms of . . . having the confidence of being an organization . . . The freedom of association is being taken advantage of . . . as enshrined in the constitution. (June 7, 1999)*

She acknowledged that previously many women's organizations could not exist. The difficulty of carrying out activities was even more problematic if they addressed women's rights. With the transition, however, more organizations formed and began addressing issues that had been prohibited in the past. Although her organization and others still negotiated the fear remaining from the authoritarian regime, they were slowly venturing into areas of nonpartisan politics and women's rights. They were recognizing that the tenets of democracy were beginning to hold. This woman also suggested that her organization drew on the constitution, which not only contributes to the democratization process but also provides women the freedom to address their grievances. A woman from a different organization supported the view that the existence of her organization, which addressed nonpartisan issues, was one of the first steps in challenging the government:

> *That's why we are taking bold steps, you know, to go to the grassroots, to educate them, to get involved. That is the advantage we are taking. Because before then, we couldn't do that. We couldn't even talk politics, you know. Now you go and you talk politics, it doesn't matter where you are talking from. (May 13, 1998)*

Not only could women's organizations begin to form to address women's rights, but they could also openly talk about nonpartisan political issues without serious consequences. Before the transition to democracy, women did not have the option to form these organizations, let alone deal with issues much beyond income generation. With the change in political environment, however, women indicated they were becoming bolder in addressing these issues. Simply encouraging women to vote in the presidential elections was a daring act. They were brave, because they were speaking publicly about topics that were once forbidden. One woman proudly declared:

> *we now feel bold enough to talk about human rights issues, and also about the emancipation of women, for example, bringing them out of . . . customary practices, which we, otherwise, would not be able to talk about with them before. We have women's rights really on the agenda now. The focus really came after [democratization]. Even though we had worked on legal rights and other issues, we had really not pushed forward too much openly as we are doing now. (May 11, 1998)*

Another member from the same organization supported this view when she passionately stated:

> *[Women's organizations] don't really feel stifled. Previously, they would be cautious, you know, coming up and going on out, advocating for certain changes, etc, etc. But now there are so many groups, ready to [advocate] . . . In the past, you'd be like, "Wow, that's a government person, I dare not say anything, as an organization or personally." But then, [our organization] came out with a statement condemning them on air . . . we've come a long way. (May 21, 1999)*

Interestingly, women's discussions of being bold and shedding the fear of the government became more prevalent starting from mid-1998—six years and two presidential elections after the initial transition. Only after the second presidential elections, which had fewer irregularities, did women begin to more openly engage nonpartisan political issues and challenge government officials.[1] This time frame also overlapped with increased access to funding. The topics that women chose to address, in the beginning, were often in line with the agendas of donor agencies. They often emphasized issues of women's rights, such as domestic violence and the practice of trokosi. Gaining more access to good-governance funding may have increased the women's confidence in confronting the government.

As women's attitudes slowly changed, they became proud of their new activities and recognized that they were daring in pursuing them. In the process, they

also acknowledged the benefits of democracy, and they came to rely on the tenets of the democratization process. In particular, members of women's groups would make reference to the constitution and emphasize the need for their nonpartisan political activities and goals. In order for the government to claim it was a legitimate democracy, it had to abide by the constitution, and members of women's organizations took advantage of this. In addition, most members, before the 2000 presidential elections, also saw the future becoming brighter. One woman explained:

> *There are more women's organizations that are taking interest in policy issues. If that continues, then this will lead to a very vibrant society. The constitution has also been very important. It has served as a reference point. Even those involved in the electoral process have accepted that women should participate in politics. In the year 2000 Nana Konadu will no longer be the first lady. This should provide more space. I can't see [the 31st December Women's Movement being] as powerful as it is now because the ties to the state will be relinquished. (June 11, 1999)*

This woman emphasized how democratization allowed women's organizations to participate in politics, and she pointed to the 2000 elections as an important transition since Rawlings, according to the constitution, would be required to step down. Members of women's organizations not only began to recognize the change in the political opportunity structure, which they could take advantage of, but they also had hope for the future. They saw the 2000 elections as a crucial transition period that could allow for even more change. Although women's active political participation with the transition to democracy was initially slow, women began to view democratization as an opportunity for change. They used the political system to their advantage, and, in doing so, they contributed to the democratic process. The acknowledgement of the tools given to them with democratization was the first step in engaging the formal political system. The next step required women's involvement in political issues.

WOMEN REPRESENTING WOMEN

Despite the fact that autonomous women's organizations still worked separately, many were beginning to work toward similar goals. They remained suspicious and distrustful of one another, and even if they were working on the same issues, they were not interested in collaborating with one another. However, although women's organizations still operated as "separate islands," their nonpartisan political interests began to merge. One of the main themes that reverber-

ated throughout my interviews was the importance of women representing women within politics. This reaffirms Mary H. Moran's (1989) argument that only women can truly understand and represent the concerns of other women because women's identity is tied to life experiences that only women can understand. In informal politics, particularly in Ghana, women held positions such as queenmother in which they acted for and represented women of their communities. This idea directly translated into the activities and goals of the women's organizations. Although members did not place queenmothers at the center of their agenda, and most did not try to make the connection between informal and formal politics through queenmothers, the concepts remained the same.

Organizations also did not overlook queenmothers. On the contrary, when workshops or rallies were held in any location, they would inform the queenmother of the area and seek approval. When organizations such as the YWCA, FIDA, and WiLDAF organized nonpartisan political activities, they would be certain to incorporate queenmothers. They recognized that with the support of the queenmother they would most likely receive support from the women as well. The leader of ASAWA was herself a queenmother in the Central Region. The residents of the area chose her to be queenmother, and as a way to give back to her community, she used ASAWA to help provide resources and opportunities for them. Therefore, among the women's organizations that were engaging formal politics, there was some overlap between the informal and formal political spheres. However, most impressive was simply the collective identity created around the idea that only women may represent women's concerns, which appeared to be carried over from the informal political system to the formal one.

Because of this reasoning, members of different organizations that worked separately from one another all believed it was essential to get women involved in politics. Their goals were to encourage women to view politics as a domain for women as well as men and to encourage women to place women's concerns above any other concerns. Women's identity should take precedence over any other identity. Members felt strongly about the importance of women representing women in formal politics, and they presented it with force. One member suggested that gender trumps all other identities:

> *I come from a very large family, and we have politicians from all divides, NPP people and NDC people, but at the end of the day, when we come together, we are a family, you see. And, this is what I want to implant into people's heads. No matter where you are coming from, no matter your political divide, at the end of the day, if it's an issue that concerns women, it is women's affairs and nobody will be able to argue without or discuss without consulting a woman. (May 13, 1998)*

She asserted that only women can understand the plight and problems of other women, and placed particular emphasis on political parties, arguing that women's issues should take priority over political concerns. Given that there are strong loyalties among supporters of both NPP and NDC parties, placing women's issues over party loyalties demonstrates the woman's perception of how gender should be prioritized over any cleavages. She was not alone in expressing this sentiment. A member from another organization explained the need to support women in politics:

> *[Women should be] putting support behind women who dare to be elected. They should put aside their political differences. If you see that I have been brave to stand for parliament, and you know what I will do, when I go, I can do the right thing. You've got to forget about political affiliations. (October 21, 1997)*

Because members of these women's organizations were so concerned about women's issues, they were not aligning themselves along party lines. Although donor agencies were fearful of supporting partisan politics, these women indicated that partisanship was furthest from their minds. As one woman succinctly explained, "Every woman should get involved. We should be interested in issue-based politics. The issues are still the same, regardless of the parties people belong to" (May 22, 1998). Women's concerns were most important.

The need for women's representation was not only presented in relation to political parties. It was also emphasized as an overall need to create change for women, as one woman explained:

> *Once [women] have been able to find their platform, they will want more women to go to parliament, because there are so many women's issues that in the future have to be tackled. And the men do not understand. So, if we keep many men there, our plight will not be recognized there. (October 7, 1997)*

Getting women into parliament was particularly important given that women have continually been excluded from government structures, and women's concerns, especially in relation to education and health, had been previously overlooked. Only with women in government will issues that pertain to women be addressed. A member from another organization reiterated this concern by bringing it back to women's legal status:

> *[Women in politics is] very, very important, you know. Because politics is where the laws are made. If you want laws favorable to you, you should be part of it. (November 13, 1997, A)*

Members of women's organizations were so impassioned about the needs and rights of women that they argued that it helped to prevent divisions along other lines.

Most respondents in the interviews emphasized the need to put aside differences in order to further women's rights and representation. Although divisions based on age remained problematic, most members believed they needed to overcome differences in order to further women's rights. Members believed that women's issues needed to trump political party issues. The same was true with ethnicity. Ethnicity was rarely brought up as a divisive issue, and when it was, it was quickly dismissed. One woman quickly responded to my question about ethnicity, firmly stating, "No, [ethnicity does not play a role] not at all" (June 7, 1999). Another respondent said, "So, the reason we're in a particular area is not because of the ethnicity of the area. You know, that you just go to that area, just pick a group and deal with them [according to the topic you are interested in], and ethnicity is not an issue" (May 24, 1999). This woman emphasized addressing the issue and the agenda, in this case focusing on getting women involved in the formal political process, rather than focusing on ethnicity. Another woman stated, "In matters like ethnicity—it's people—people begin to look at issues rather than where does who come from" (May 21, 1999). Again, the women's agenda takes preference over divisions. In fact, within FIDA, multiethnicity is rather viewed as an advantage in their work on women's rights issues. One member explained:

> *Ethnicity does not create conflict. If anything it is an asset. There are different lawyers who speak different languages. We call on them when individuals come in and don't speak any English. We have standby lawyers for different languages. Ethnicity is an advantage. (May 22, 1999)*

Most of the autonomous women's organizations I spoke with had members from multiple ethnic backgrounds, and no members saw this as problematic. The goals and activities of the organizations did not revolve around ethnicity or ethnic-based issues, so it was not salient enough to create conflict. Instead, the core issues were basic women's rights, and most agreed that any differences based on ethnicity or political parties should be put aside in order to tackle both women's rights and women's participation in formal politics. Women's identity and women's need to work as a collective were placed at the forefront.

The idea of women representing women's concerns ultimately merged with mobilization tactics used in the emerging democratic setting. Women's organizations, working separately from one another, started to focus on mobilizing women to participate in the formal political process so women could represent

their own concerns and contribute to transforming their rights. One respondent demonstrated this clearly when she explained:

> *Elections are very important because for a long time we were under military rule. Elections give us the opportunity to select who we (women) want . . . Even if we don't work in the formal sector, we still work hard. Many women are the head of the household. So, if women know the right thing to do, it will help a lot . . . We [the women's organization] want to educate women on their right to vote and the importance of voting and on putting support behind women running—regardless of the political parties [the women are affiliated with]. (October 21, 1997)*

She combined the idea of women's representation with the act of mobilizing women to vote in elections. Democratization had given women's organizations the opportunity to get women involved in formal politics, and more broadly to recognize the importance of women representing the concerns of women. Now they simply had to mobilize women to participate in the formal political process and engage the government.

GETTING OUT THE VOTE

Although women's autonomous organizations continued to work separately to guard their resources, most began to incorporate democratic principles within their organizational agendas after the transition. For example, the YWCA and the Women's Section of the Christian Council held special meetings to inform their members about the importance of voting and expressing their economic and political concerns by participating in the electoral process. Their emphasis was not only on participation within the formal political process, but specifically on participation as women. Other organizations, such as ASAWA and WiLDAF, transformed some of their activities to incorporate nonpartisan political issues by encouraging women in Ghana to become active in politics. Regardless of the organization women belong to, all of the respondents in the interviews emphasized the importance of mobilizing women to participate in politics. Members recognized that without the support of the public their efforts to transform women's rights would be ineffective. For example, one member of a women's organization stated:

> *Our main goal is to mobilize more women, get something for them to do, so that they can get themselves involved in national activities, like what we're doing, to mobilize them and talk to them We wanted all the women to get involved, because population-*

wise, we found out women are more . . . And, so, if they withdraw from policy making and they can't get themselves involved in whatever goes on in the community where they live, it creates problems for the nation at large . . . You have to mobilize these women. (June 15, 1999)

For this member, the mobilization of women was central to improving women's positions. If policies are to address women's concerns, women need to become involved, particularly since they make up more than half the country. She, along with other members, also emphasized the need to get women involved at the community level as well as the national level. As one woman explained:

And getting in—in issues affecting them, in local, grassroots politics and national district politics, that is the only way to do it . . . The authorities for many governments don't have their priorities right. All this time, all this is happening, you get women doing nothing. I think the economy of this—the economy of this country will move forward [with women in politics]. (November 4, 1997)

According to these respondents, the only way to create change, and particularly in relation to women's rights, is to get women at both the local and national levels to become involved in politics. If political structures are going to be transformed to address women's concerns, then the structures must be approached from all angles. Women's participation is thus presented as a new opportunity for women, which creates the need for mobilization at the community and national levels. One woman compared this to spreading the gospel:

Since I know Ms. X very well, and I am very interested in women's issues, she sought my help and said could I come and talk, to spread the gospel to encourage women to get involved in the decision-making level from the grassroots level. And also to encourage them to get into politics . . . And no matter where you are, what you are, or your background, you can make a contribution, you see. So that's the gospel that we are spreading. (May 13, 1998)

Women from all of the organizations I spoke with recognized the necessity of mobilizing women to become involved in formal politics. If they did not succeed in encouraging women to become involved in formal politics, they also would not succeed in achieving their own organizational goals, which focused on improving women's rights.

When members of women's organizations directed their activities toward mobilizing women to vote in the 1996 presidential elections, they focused on the ideas of civic responsibility and human rights. By "spreading the gospel" that

women could make a difference simply through voting, members hoped to achieve two goals: (1) get women to vote, and (2) to socialize women to become actively involved in their community and ultimately in the formal political process. Many members of the women's organizations strongly supported voting as a means to incorporate women into an emerging democratic state. They hoped that, through voting, women would start to become involved in formal politics more generally so they may work to improve conditions such as low wages and conditions in the informal sector, particularly for women traders, whose jobs were usually not formally recognized by the government. One woman explained the importance of tying voting to civic responsibility:

> *[We] talk about the environment and women. We're in the time now. [Women] should not be left behind . . . Then, we made the elections a current issue, where they have to express their will . . . So, we talk to them in general about the position of women in society and their community . . . They shouldn't hide. They shouldn't feel shy . . . Then, we give these women education about the election. (October 7, 1997)*

The ultimate goal of this organization was to explain to women that they can make a difference within their community, as well as nationally. They hoped to get more women involved in formal politics by explaining their participation as a civic duty. A different organization took this idea one step further by tying the voting process to human rights issues. One member stated:

> *Our comment was, what was the responsibility of women in the community when it comes to voting? [We needed to] show them the procedure of voting . . . And then we brought a lawyer to educate them of women's rights abuse. We emphasized the responsibility of people within the community they lived in. (November 4, 1997)*

By relating voting to women's current situations, and in this case by tying it to human rights, they hoped to encourage women to engage the formal political process. A member from the same organization spoke forcefully about women voting:

> *I'll tell you, I don't care how you vote. Find out the issues that they are concerned with. Read their manifest. See what they are doing. If you like it, fine. Vote—but vote anyway, and vote for somebody, and belong to a party. Be involved, and that's all there is to it. (May 13, 1998)*

In all of the organizations that focused on the process of voting, members passionately described how voting was part of women's civic duty. They strongly believed that women had a responsibility to vote in order to make a difference in

their community, and they hoped to link women's civic responsibility within their local communities to formal politics.

During the 1996 election year, ASAWA held democratization workshops in seven regions of Ghana to encourage women to participate in the elections. UNIWAF held democratization workshops to make women aware of their civic responsibilities and to educate them on voting procedures, the importance of voting, the role of women in politics, and the different political parties. WiLDAF fostered a rights awareness program, which trained leaders in various communities and equipped them to disseminate information within the community. Members held sessions that focused on voting rights and democracy. FIDA–Ghana also traveled throughout the country informing women of their right to vote in the elections. One FIDA member summarized the goals of their activities:

> *We will encourage them, we will educate them on the need to be involved in the electoral process. That will be one aspect. And we will also educate them, as I said, to put their weight behind somebody who is good, not to think about political affiliation. And, also, to encourage them to vote for what they stand for in elections. (October 21, 1997)*

The electoral process was presented as an opportunity for women to improve their rights. If women become involved in civic responsibilities within their communities and vote, then they may make a difference in their own lives. Members believed they needed to mobilize women to vote, initiating women's participation within formal political structures, and to improve women's rights and provide support for a broader women's movement.

Through the mobilization process, autonomous women's organizations were laying the building blocks for a larger movement. Unfortunately, many still maintained the distrust they had of other organizations, and most refused to form alliances for fear of losing resources. Although members of women's organization were becoming bolder in addressing nonpartisan political issues, the fear retained from the authoritarian regime still fed the distrust between organizations. This lack of trust, however, may have also allowed them to succeed in mobilizing women to vote in the 1996 presidential elections.

That women's activities were separate and low-key may be why President Rawlings, his party the NDC, and the 31st December Women's Movement did not stop the activities of the autonomous women's organizations. Most threats were attempts to stop organizational activities, but in many cases members continued with their goals. Although the intimidation slowed down activities, it generally did not completely halt them. In addition, the autonomous women's organizations may not have been viewed as a serious threat to the government since they

were working separately, they were not publicly displaying their activities, and they were simply working to encourage women to participate actively in their communities or vote in the elections. These activities could benefit President Rawlings and the NDC by increasing women's contributions to the country's overall economic development and perhaps increasing voter turnout for the NDC. Autonomous women's organizations may have ultimately succeeded in initiating the women's mobilization process by carrying out their activities independently and quietly prior to the 1996 presidential elections.

The results of a survey collected, in fact, indicate that members of autonomous women's organizations did affect the political behavior of women, and they were successful in mobilizing women to vote in the 1996 presidential elections (Fallon 2003a; for detailed tables and analyses, please see Appendix B). Of a total of 621 surveys of Ghanaian women, 305 were conducted in the capital city Accra and 316 were conducted in rural towns located in the Central Region of Ghana.[2] The survey was stratified among lower, middle, and upper class women in urban and rural areas.

Women who belonged to autonomous women's organizations were more likely to have voted in the 1996 elections. Other variables that influenced women's voting behavior included whether women voted in the 1992 elections, whether women lived with their husbands, and whether women lived in urban areas. Yet, even when taking these and additional variables into account, being a member of an autonomous women's organization remained central in determining women's political behavior. In addition, women's membership was significant in comparison to women's overall community participation, which would suggest that women's political behavior goes beyond civic participation. Women's membership in autonomous organizations and their voting behavior may be linked to women's organizations' agendas, which shifted to both civic and political participation. Given that of the survey population, 40 percent of the women belonged to an autonomous women's organization, the possibility of garnering women's support is great. The mobilization process through gendered organizations helped socialize women to view formal politics as a means for change and set the stage for future activism.

Impressively, every woman who had been directly contacted by an organization (a member of an organization came to their door, or they attended a workshop or rally) that encouraged women to participate in formal politics voted in the election. The number of surveyed women contacted is significantly lower, at 5 percent, in comparison to the number of women who were members of autonomous organizations. However, the finding is powerful. Simply being a member had an

impact on women's behavior, but having direct contact solidified women's political participation. Moreover, this outcome was achieved during a period in which many women's organizations were denied or had limited access to good-governance funding. If women's access to donor funding increased or if autonomous women's organization were no longer threatened by the state, then the impact of women's organizations on formal politics could be even greater.

During this early stage of democratization, members of women's organizations in Ghana were able to draw on existing gendered structures to mobilize women. They used their own membership pools, and when they went to districts throughout Ghana, they worked with community women's organizations to encourage women to participate in the formal voting process. Through existing structures, organizations were able to encourage their own members to participate, and they had a tremendous impact on women who were directly contacted and encouraged to participate in the formal political process. The activities of women's organizations therefore greatly influenced women's electoral participation, which also set the stage for future mobilization prospects.

TRANSFORMING WOMEN'S RIGHTS

During the 1996 presidential elections, women started mobilizing women to engage formal politics, and now they needed to use the seeds they planted to rally women behind their cause of ending women's murders. In 1999, members from different autonomous women's organizations were able to put aside most of their differences and distrust of one another to come together and form a coalition, Sisters' Keepers, to address the serial killings in Ghana.[3] The murders created urgency for immediate change. Members from women's organizations recognized that not enough was being done to stop the killings, which continued to place women at risk of their lives. Members of Sisters' Keepers, along with other women's organizations, called upon women to hold two massive demonstrations protesting the lack of action taken by the police force and the government. Through their existing gendered structures, and with the help of media, they garnered support from women within their organizations, as well as support from the general public. They asked that more attention be given to the murders and that women's public safety be made a primary concern of the government.

Members of the coalition saw the 2000 presidential elections as an opportunity to bring solving the serial killings to the fore. The 2000 presidential elections were key elections in Ghana since President Rawlings was expected to step down,

and the primary opposition party, the New Patriotic Party, could come to power. Members of women's organizations used this opportunity to highlight government accountability to women. When the elections led to a runoff between the two presidential candidates, members increased the pressure on the government. On a popular FM station, Beatrice Duncan, a member of FIDA, held President Rawlings accountable for the murders. In the same week, the member of parliament for Ablekuma South, also the president of UNIWAF, organized a march to the office of the inspector general of police (IGP), Peter Nanfuri, to demonstrate their disapproval of the way the police had handled the murders. Members of the coalition similarly placed gender at the center of their agenda. They argued that the matter was not being addressed because the victims were women. They demanded that the inspector general of police be replaced and that public safety be placed at the center of the presidential debates.

John Atta Mills, the former vice president of President Rawlings and presidential candidate for the NDC, did not heed this call. However, John Kufuor, the candidate for the New Patriotic Party, emphasized women's public safety in a television broadcast (Reuters 2000). He specifically addressed the problem and attempted to appeal to women. Some argue that this led to his winning the elections and to the interior minister and his deputy being voted out of office due to their poor record on public safety. Although it is difficult to make a direct link between these outcomes, they do suggest the public was disillusioned with key players in charge of women's safety and bringing the serial killings to an end. Even after President Kufuor was elected to office, he followed through with women's demands by suspending the IGP and creating a Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. In this culmination of events, women used their associations to their advantage and, in the end, achieved their goals.

During the period of the serial killings, women's mobilization tactics changed significantly. Two primary factors influenced the mobilization process: funding and the initial incorporation of women into the formal political system. When the transition to democracy took place, numerous laws, often linked to donor programs, were passed. In 1993, the punishment of rape was increased to add a fine and jail time of three years to life in prison, which could be applied for crimes against a female of any age. Rape and/or defilement of a girl under 14 years, with or without her consent, became punishable as a second-degree felony with 12 months to 10 years in jail. In 1994, an amendment was passed to make the practice of trokosi illegal. A law forbidding the practice of female genital cutting was also successfully passed in 1994. A criminal statute passed in 1994 prohibited

wife beating; unfortunately, some ambiguity remained because British common law, established during colonization, allowed for domestic abuse. This is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

The change in laws appears to go hand in hand with the funding situation for women's organizations. As discussed in Chapter 4, most donor agencies did not fund women's organizations for good-governance programs until after 1997. Instead, the funds given to women's organizations focused on specific rights violations, such as reducing the practice of trokosi and domestic violence. With access to funding, and thus increased resources, women's organizations appear to have succeeded in lobbying the government on these issues. Funding opportunities combined with the new democratic environment provided the political opportunity needed for members of women's organizations to pursue topics they would not have dared address under the authoritarian regime. Increased access to funding for good-governance programs may have also helped to spur mass mobilization of women in 1999 and 2000.

In addition, socializing women to engage formal politics during the 1996 presidential elections allowed for a more successful mobilization process when members of organizations chose to take on the serial killings. Because many women are members of a women's organization, they are already more likely to engage formal politics. Leaders thus used their membership base to call for mass demonstrations, which were successful. In addition, because the need to mobilize was urgent, members of women's organizations finally overcame much of their fear of other organizations and their need to protect their resources. They drew on identity issues by forming the coalition Sisters' Keepers, which attempted to illicit a response from men, who would not want to see their sisters murdered. Other coalitions, such as the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NetRight), also formed during this time period. By creating coalitions that included women's groups within Accra and throughout Ghana, members of women's organizations were able to gain support and national media attention. Through the initial socialization of women into formal politics, members of women's organizations secured enough support from women to make their presence and demands known to the government. Even after the 2000 elections, and an arrest of a suspect in the murders, coalitions and their demands remained.

As the transition to democracy became more distant, women began to overcome the residual fear from the authoritarian regime and grew bolder in lobbying the government and mobilizing women. Their mobilization effort culmi-

nated in 2000, when women gained more access to funding and the urgency to resolve the serial killings resonated with women. The new culture of politics that women negotiated included a positive change in political structures, accessing existing gendered structures, and an increase in resources that allowed women to engage formal politics. Most important was the change in political structures with democratization.

With the transition to democracy, the constitution was formed, the social and political environment changed, and the 31st December Women's Movement began to lose its influence. Although members of women's organizations were not actively involved in the transition to democracy in the beginning, once it took place, they began to recognize the political opportunities created for them. To them, the constitution existed to uphold the law. They, therefore, drew on the constitution to support their claims and to protect themselves from any possible retribution from the state. This was combined with an overall social and political change. Although the first elections were deemed unfair, more journalists and other individuals began to speak out and take action against Rawlings's government with minimal repercussions. This led to members of the women's organizations taking advantage of the political opportunity that democratization had provided by becoming bolder in speaking out against the government. They chose to challenge the government on women's rights issues that had not been challenged under the authoritarian regime. These actions went hand in hand with the decline of the 31st December Women's Movement. The 31st December Women's Movement did not have as much pull or access to resources as it did prior to the transition, since in a democratic state it could not easy draw on state resources. It could therefore no longer act as a serious threat to women's organizations. Members of organizations recognized that the 31st December Women's Movement would have even less power when Rawlings would be forced to step down in the 2000 elections. Thus, the democratization process offered members of women's organizations with opportunities they did not have under previous regimes.

The change in the political opportunity structure was combined with a change in donor policies. After the 1996 elections, donor agencies began to give more funding to organizations dealing with nonpartisan political projects, which opened the door for some women's organizations. In addition, the continued funding for certain agendas, such as violence against women and other women's rights issues, increased members' abilities to speak out against practices violating women's rights. This change in donor policies led many women's organiza-

tions, although working separately, to work on similar topics and begin to use the political opening to contest rights. Donor funding contributed to the development of the women's movement.

Their success, though, was also in large part due to gendered structures consisting of a strong network of women's organizations alongside informal political structures that existed prior to the democratic transition. The existence of women's organizations was not new to Ghana, since women had actively participated in organizations, whether community-, age-, ethnically, or religiously based. Once the leaders of women's organizations recognized the opportunities created with democratization, many simply adapted new tenets into their programs in order to encourage their members to participate in the newly formed political structures. Most organizations focused on voting, civic participation, and women's rights. In doing so, they also drew on the idea practiced within informal political structures that it was a necessity for women to participate in formal politics because only women could represent the needs of other women. Drawing on the experiences tied to women's collective identities, members of women's organizations argued that only through female representation within government structures could women's rights be successfully addressed, and the first step to achieve this goal involved mobilizing women to view formal politics as a means for change. Members of women's organizations thus drew on womanhood as a collective identity to encourage women to participate in community activities, as well as engage the new formal political structures. By relying both on existing gendered structures and womanhood identity, members appeared to have a significant effect on women's political participation. Because of the approach taken, members of women's organizations were more likely to vote in the 1996 presidential elections, and every woman who was directly contacted by a women's organizations about formal politics voted in the elections.

What really catapulted women into action was when all of these factors coalesced with the tragic serial killings in Accra, the capital of Ghana. Most likely aided by donor resources, women's organizations were able to draw on existing gendered structures to mobilize women and bring considerable attention to the murders. Although members of women's organizations originally worked separately when encouraging women to participate in formal political politics, they also planted the seeds for a larger movement. They encouraged their own members, along with other women, to view formal politics as a means to transform and address women's concerns. Their suspicion of one another dissipated when they all agreed to work on the same goals. Women suddenly had a clear agenda that led them to actively draw upon their pre-existing gendered structures, as well

as their collective identities as women, to achieve their aims. In addition, even after the murders stopped and a suspect was apprehended, coalitions, such as NetRight, remained, and leaders of women's organizations were more likely to work with one another. By working together, members of women's organizations successfully used the election year to their advantage.

The slow development of a larger women's movement in Ghana that engaged the formal political sphere and encouraged women to become involved in formal politics emerged due to that country's specific circumstances. Clearly, the development of women's movements in other sub-Saharan countries will differ according to their specific contexts. However, three common factors play into the possible outcomes. First, given that governments are truly making a transition to democracy, members of women's organizations may draw on the tenets of democracy, whether by relying on the constitution or using electoral years to their advantage to make a change. Second, throughout sub-Saharan Africa, women have been actively involved women's organizations that have transformed according to times. Women have also often been involved in informal political structures where women held leadership positions within their communities. The networks for mobilization and the collective identities formed within organizations existed prior to the transition, allowing women to draw on them with the transition. Finally, assuming that the democratic transitions occurred in the early to mid-1990s, members of women's organizations may benefit from increased resources from donor agencies with agendas focusing on women's rights and good-governance programs.

Women in various sub-Saharan African countries may form women's movements like Ghana's given similar conditions. For example, autonomous women's organizations in Mali also slowly entered the formal political process (Wing 2002). In the 1980s and 1990s, women were co-opted by the Union National des Femmes du Mali (UNFM), and although the organization was disbanded after the coup and the eventual transition to democracy in 1991, women still distrusted the government and women holding positions within the government. Nonetheless, with democratization, women drew on their existing community-based women's organizations to form coalitions and connect with the government. An organization was created to serve as a link between the primary women's bureau of the government and local women's associations to make women's concerns known to the government. Although the organization only had 50 member organizations in 1994, by 1998 it had 191, and it was believed to be central in mobilizing women to elect a woman to the National Assembly in 1997. In addition, with the transition, women relied on the constitution to gain more rights.

The recognition of the political opportunity provided by the transformation of political structures via the transition to democracy offers hope and optimism to women interested in engaging formal politics in sub-Saharan Africa. Drawing on preexisting gendered structures and increased resources, women are more likely to succeed in their goals. Unfortunately, despite the positive outcomes, there are still overarching obstacles that may prove difficult to overcome, particularly in relation to formal political structures. How might women's successes be thwarted? Specifically, how might masculinist government structures, combined with government agendas, slow women's gains? In the next chapter, obstacles that members of women's organizations continue to face are explored, with particular attention given to political structures.

CHAPTER SIX

Big Men, Small Girls, and the Politics of Power

In December 2004, I was sitting in the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs waiting to speak with the main representative. I knew that I wouldn't be able to speak with the minister herself, but I would be able to establish contact with the second-in-command. I had scheduled an appointment to speak with him about the domestic violence bill, which leaders of women's organizations claimed was being stalled by the ministry. I wanted to know what representatives from the ministry would say about the bill, and I was now waiting for the representative to return from a luncheon. When he arrived, he was dismissive. He eventually had his secretary lead me into his office and offered me a seat. I gave him my business card, thinking it might change his demeanor. It didn't. Since I didn't want to begin the introduction by addressing the contentious domestic violence bill, I started to simply ask questions about the role of the ministry, in particular reference to women's issues. Again, he indicated that I was wasting his time and that I should be speaking with the National Council for Women in Development (NCWD), since they addressed women's affairs. I informed him that I was aware of the activities of NCWD, and I was interested in the activities of the ministry. When I realized that he was not going to provide me with any information, I explained that I was under the impression that the ministry was involved in dealing with a domestic violence bill. His demeanor rapidly changed, and not for the better. Previously, he had been annoyed (perhaps because he had to end his luncheon to meet with me), but now he was agitated. He quickly went on the defensive. In a raised, stern tone he explained to me that his ministry was a government organization and that they were taking their time to conduct surveys to find out the view of the general population toward the domestic violence bill. He then

claimed that the ministry was not an NGO, and should not be expected to run like an NGO—they were doing respectable work. He went further by stating that the leaders of these women's organizations who were creating problems for the ministry, were a bunch of "small girls" who wanted to tell him, "a big man," what should be done. According to him, most of these "girls" had not even entered primary school by the time he received his degree, and he should not have to listen to them. He further explained that they could not be taken seriously, since they could not maintain their own families and instead advocated for the breakup of families. In his eyes, the leaders of the women's organizations were simply "small girls" who were making trouble and challenging tradition. Interestingly, during the reassertion of his "big man" status, the agitation turned to pride as he pulled out a photo album of himself as a chief. I said nothing during his charged response to my inquiry about domestic violence. By the end, he had calmed down, and I asked his permission to interview another representative of the ministry, which he kindly (and, to me, somewhat surprisingly) granted.[1]

As I was sitting in his office, I realized that despite all of the opportunities that the democratization process afforded to members of women's organizations, their progress hinged on the political structures they negotiated. If they did not have the support of government officials, or if the formal political structures were not amenable to women, their goals could only partially be realized. In this instance, not only did they have to contend with the government officials and structures, but because they were working within a postcolonial state, their most recent goals were quickly labeled as "anticultural" and "anti-Ghanaian." According to those who opposed the domestic violence bill, the women and men who were pushing for it were instilling Western values that would ultimately lead to the deterioration of cultural values held in Ghana.

In addition to being associated with antifamily and anti-Ghanaian rhetoric, leaders of women's organizations had to contend with not-so-accessible political structures. They bemoaned the fact that they had not successfully gotten more women into parliamentary positions. Although percentagewise, the numbers have increased, the increase has been minutely incremental. In 1992, 9 percent of the members of parliament were women, and in 2004, 11 percent of the members of parliament were women. In part, these numbers could reflect the inability of the women's organizations to successfully encourage and support women to run for these positions. However, the numbers also no doubt reflect the plural majority system within which women are expected to operate. As discussed in Chapter 3, this political system is the weakest in terms of providing women opportunities to hold political positions (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Lovenduski

and Norris 1993; Matland 1998; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). If leaders of women's organizations believe that they can only succeed in winning women's rights with increased female representation, then, despite all of the benefits provided with democratization, they still have an uphill battle.

In this chapter, I begin by explaining how the women's movement in Ghana was able to build on existing gendered structures to become consolidated in the late 1990s and entering 2000. Yet, despite this consolidation, they still faced roadblocks, and much of this was related to government structures and government agendas (Manuh 2007). I thus turn my attention to the role of political structures for women in sub-Saharan Africa more generally and relate this to Ghana. Following this discussion, I examine a specific case that demonstrates the hurdles created by government structures and a larger government agenda. I explain the development of the bill on domestic violence and the continuous problems members of women's organizations have had to contend with since the 2000 presidential elections. In the end, I describe how the hindrances created by the formal political structures and government agendas may prevent women from making the gains they hope to.[2]

SOLIDIFYING THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

After the serial killings, women in Ghana put aside their distrust of one another and overcame much of the fear they originally had of the state to form the coalition Sisters' Keepers. This was just one of many coalitions that formed around the same time, indicating the consolidation of the women's movement in Ghana (Manuh 2007). In 1999, the Third World Network, an international non-governmental organization, held a workshop in eight different countries, Ghana being one of them, for members of women's organizations to discuss women's national machineries. In Ghana, two issues were addressed: (1) the role of the National Council for Women and Development (NCWD), and (2) the role of all local non-governmental organizations that worked on gendered issues. During the workshop, the theme that emerged was why women's organizations had not had any sort of impact on the NCWD, a formal state organization that advises the government on issues related to women. In the end, they came to the conclusion that it was because the local NGOs lacked a common approach. They recognized that they all focused on similar topics and were working toward similar goals, yet they continued to work separately. However, if they spoke with one voice and expressed a common platform, they believed they could have an impact. This realization led to the development of the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NetRight). The

founding group consisted of 11 to 12 different local organizational groups, and it currently has 23 member organizations, with additional individual members. One of the original founders explained the development of NetRight:

> *One of the things that came out of the workshop . . . was that one of the reasons why the national machinery was not responsive to gender equity issues was that we lacked a common approach to the national machinery and that women's NGOs were doing a lot of very good work, but as individual organizations, and we did not have any platform which would focus on issues that concerned all of us . . . And, so, a decision was taken to establish such a platform and the idea was that it would be a network, a very loose organization, and that people would participate in it as strongly or as weakly as they liked, and that it would try not to duplicate what others were already doing, but rather bring additionality, and that members would ask the network to help them participate in their individual organizational activities if and when they thought they needed a collective voice . . . NetRight appeared at a very good time in NGO activism because for a number of years separate NGOs had been doing very good work . . . Each of these organizations was becoming more and more confident about what they were set up to do, and they were doing very well. NetRight came at a time when it was clearly recognized by many organizations that lack of collective approach was a problem. One could say that its time had come. (July 25, 2006)*

A cohesiveness between different women's organizations developed. They still negotiated their terms within the coalition, but they actively worked toward common goals. They believed by working as a group they could gain more visibility and increase their influence on the national government.

NetRight was one of the first networked organizations to develop, and it was quickly followed by Sisters' Keepers, the Women's Manifesto Coalition, and the Domestic Violence Coalition. Each of these networks worked toward their own goals, there was often cross-membership of organizations and individuals, and communication was maintained primarily through listservs but also via weekly or monthly meetings, postal mail, and telephone communications. Sisters' Keepers focused on the serial killings and dissolved after the killings came to an end. Members of the Women's Manifesto Coalition attempt to hold the government accountable for the rights outlined in the women's manifesto they created. These rights touch on economic empowerment, land rights, social policy and development, politics and decision making, human rights and the law, discriminatory cultural practices, women and media representation, women and conflict/peace, women with special needs, and institutions with the mandate to promote women's rights. The Domestic Violence Coalition focuses on bringing attention to the

domestic violence bill and pushing it through parliament. Members of NetRight work toward changing goals depending on the concerns of the members, but they are currently focusing on economic policy.

Local non-governmental organizations working on women's rights issues have finally mobilized to form a larger coherent women's movement. They have consolidated their organizations, and they are working as a group toward goals they all share. Unfortunately, they still remain frustrated by the government.

WOMEN AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES

The success of sub-Saharan African women creating political change partially hinges on the government structures they face. As discussed in Chapter 3, countries that fair better with women's representation generally use proportional representation and quotas (Htun and Jones 2002; Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Matland 1998; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). This holds true in Africa, where the countries with the best legislative representation of women use proportional representation or quotas, or a combination of both (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2007). For example, Rwanda, which has the highest female legislative representation in the world (at 48.8 percent), uses both proportional representation and quotas. Similarly, in Mozambique and South Africa, where representation is at 34.8 percent and 32.8 percent respectively, the government structure is based on proportional representation, with gender quotas specified within party lists. However, in majoritarian systems, women's representation is limited. For example in Kenya, although there is a quota that requires the president to appoint six female legislative members, this provides for limited representation (7.1 percent) within a legislative body of 224. In Ghana, another plural majority system with no quotas, women's representation is at 10.9 percent. Although activists in Ghana were disillusioned by the fact that they did not increase the number of female representatives in parliament, this may be more due to the structure than the movement. The structure of the electoral system is crucial to women's representation and has consequences for policy outcomes.

If a women's movement has gained momentum to bring attention to a cause, they may not succeed in getting it through the legislative branch if men dominate the floor and do not see the policy as relevant to their own lives. Masculinist structures create foundations that are difficult for women to work against and reinforce the struggles that female activists must contend with when up against the state. If government agendas are also at odds with activists, this compounds pos-

sible outcomes—as is evidenced in attempts by members of the Ghanaian women's movement to push a domestic violence bill through parliament.

GHANA AND THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BILL

From 1997 until 2000, a number of factors converged to lead to the idea of creating a domestic violence bill. One of the issue-related topics donor agencies were focusing on was domestic violence. This led to studies conducted separately by various organizations such as FIDA, the Gender Centre, and UNIFEM. Through these studies, significant data emerged that indicated the prevalence and degree of domestic violence within Ghana.

Meanwhile, the Law Reform Commission, a branch of the government in which numerous women worked, began to develop a marital rape bill, since a criminal code still in existence from colonial times did not punish physical and sexual abuse within marriage. Specifically, Section 42 (g) of the Criminal Code, 1960 (Act 29) states, "the consent given by a husband or wife at marriage for the purposes of marriage, cannot be revoked until the parties are divorced or separated by a judgment or decree of a competent Court." Because marriage is considered consent, a husband has the right to physically assault or force sex on his wife. (Theoretically, the wife has the same right.) The marital rape bill, however, was never fully developed because the commission was asked by the government to put it on hold. In 1999, though, members of women's organizations took up the issue, made it a private citizen's bill, and began to draft their version of a new domestic violence bill. Recommendations were made, and it was returned to the government in 2000. Included in the recommendations was the repeal of Section 42 (g) of the Criminal Code and the inclusion of a new Section 1 (b) (ii), which prohibits "sexual abuse, namely the forceful engagement of another person in any sexual contact whether married or not which includes sexual conduct that abuses, humiliates or degrades the other person or otherwise violates another person's sexual integrity whether married or not or any sexual contact by a person aware of being infected with HIV or any other STD with another person without the other person being given prior information of the infection." The goal was to criminalize sexual and physical abuse within marriage.

The serial killings that took place from 1997 to 2000 both helped and hurt the efforts to push through the domestic violence bill. On the one hand, the murders brought attention to violence against women, and local organizations took advantage of this to gather support from the populace and to place pressure on the government. On the other hand, the focus on the serial killings distracted both

activists and the state from addressing domestic violence. Only after the serial killings had stopped did local organizations begin to regroup and ask what had happened to the domestic violence bill. In 2002, the Domestic Violence Coalition (DV Coalition) was formed, consisting of over 40 local organizations and individual members whose primary goal was to bring attention to the domestic violence bill and to push it through parliament. After the formation of the coalition, members discovered that the bill was with the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, and this is where the struggle between the state and activists began.

After President Kufuor won the 2000 elections, he created the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and appointed a minister, Gladys Asmah. Some women's organizations, however, informed the president that they did not think the creation of a ministry would improve women's situation and that it would be better to address women's issues in all areas of the government.[3] This confrontation placed Minister Asmah on the defensive, and relations between activists of local organizations and the minister continued to deteriorate—particularly in relation to the domestic violence bill.

All respondents to my surveys were in general agreement about the progression of the domestic violence bill. They all agreed, including the representative interviewed from the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, that the bill originally came from the Law Reform Commission, that some women's organizations helped to reshape it, and that it went back to the attorney general and then eventually to the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. However, their understandings of the timeline and the process differed.

Members of the DV Coalition did not understand why the bill remained with the ministry, why the minister was insisting on carrying out studies throughout Ghana, and why the bill was not being sent to parliament. According to the members, no other bill had to undergo an "educational review" throughout all of the regions of Ghana. Why did this bill need to go through this process? In addition, they believed the parliament existed to represent the views of the populace, so why not just send it to parliament so they could debate the bill there? Activists publicly accused the ministry of stalling the bill.

A representative from the Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE) explained:

> *Obviously if you look at our system of making a bill, a ministry can create a very, very unique and monopolistic role. No second ministry can combat it, and eventually they shield the passage—the submission of the bill to the executive—and that is when in Ghana the bill has been drafted. And the bill has not gone to the executive yet, for the*

executive to submit to the parliament . . . we know that the bill is in the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and it's sitting there and they are delaying it, it's a fact. (December 15, 2004)

This member of WISE expresses the sentiments of most activists involved with the DV Coalition. They view the ministry and the minister as the cause of delays in the bill. They also give credence to the power of government structures to hinder the actions of movement organizations. The ministry is working as one institution within the larger governmental structure, yet alone it can act to delay the bill. The representative for ABANTU for Development agreed with the above perspective, but also provided a more nuanced explanation by holding the state accountable for the actions and focusing on the minister. She stated:

It got to a point that they [the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs] now ignored us completely . . . And I think that she's [the minister] coming from . . . she belongs to a different generation because she's an older woman, I think. And most of the people who are in the movement now are quite young, and even if not too young . . . people from a different group all together. We are growing up in an era where gender . . . we have a kind of understanding. The older generation has an understanding which is different . . . So I think it's more her person, it's not the ministry. And also, I think that the government was a bit complacent. They thought that just setting up the women's ministry would solve their problem, but it wasn't just about putting the structure there. (December 13, 2004)

This representative explained how the minister is of a different generation and therefore would have different values. She was primarily referring to the combativeness between local organizations and the ministry. Other activists also emphasized these generational differences and expectations of the minister as problematic in furthering the issues they thought were important. However, the representative from ABANTU also faulted the government. She recognized that the government attempted to concede to women's pressure on the state by creating that Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs. Yet, she argued that they could not simply shirk responsibility by using government institutions to ignore the domestic violence bill and activists. The state needs to do more than simply make symbolic gestures to the activist community.

Members also felt that the bill was being delayed simply because Minister Asmah did not approve of it. The head of the DV Coalition[4] explained that in October 2004, Minister Asmah spoke negatively about the bill:

And then in another graphic—Daily Graphic *newspaper I think it was—on the 20-somewhere in October our Minister says the bill is too harsh. I wish I had a caption of it*

somewhere here, and then I just ask myself why did she go on a nationwide consultation on a bill that was too harsh? All she had to do was write a letter to our attorney general—"Please, the bill is too harsh and specifically this section, this section, this section. Please redraft it."—that's all she had to do. And not take taxpayers' money to go from region to region on an educational tour on a bill that was too harsh. So that makes me think that there's more to it. (December 14, 2004)

The ministry's explanation of the evolution of the Domestic Violence Bill is quite different from the activists' explanation. Employees of the ministry claim that the attorney general gave them the bill and asked them to survey the general population to discover their reactions to it. According to ministry representatives, they were simply doing their jobs within the larger government structure, and they appeared frustrated that the activists did not understand the government position. The ministry representative explained:

This is a government agency and whatever research may have been done is coming from non-governmental agencies who may also have their focus or their interests in whatever they want. But ours is not really a research, but to elicit input or opinions, feedback from the public . . . the education is very necessary if you want the law to work at the end of the day. The public must know what it says. (December 14, 2004)

According to members of the ministry, they were simply conducting their day-to-day work at the request of the government. They were working within the government structure and could not just make the changes that the activists were requesting. In addition, in response to activists asking why the bill required the educational review while other bills had not, the representative stated:

What the cabinet decided was because the bill touches on the very life, or the fabric of our society, the family and things like that, they would wish that the public has an input, has a chance to look at the bill and then give their opinions as to whether it was okay for it to be passed into law. (December 14, 2004)

Activists would counter this explanation on any number of different fronts. The expectations of the government were also used to explain the time it was taking to conduct the educational reviews. The representative said:

The minister of women and children's affairs was mandated with this task to disseminate the bill to the public [by the attorney general and the president's cabinet], and that's what we've been doing, so that is our role in this whole issue—to disseminate the contents of the bill countrywide. Now the first thing we did was to translate the bill into the local dialects . . . we've had to translate it into eight local dialects. And then we've been

to five out of the 10 regions in the country. Now we had a problem with funds after doing the five zones or five regions and then translating, the money we had for the project ran out and so we had to pause until we were able to access more funds so we were able to continue with the rest of the country. (December 14, 2004)

According to the representative, they were simply completing the task that the attorney general and the president requested of them. Responsibility for the delay of the bill did not just fall in the hands of the ministry, but also into the hands of higher government authorities. Moreover, the bureaucratic nature of the government was used to explain the delay—moving from the attorney general, to the council, and back to the ministry. Within the ministry, the delay was further explained by the time taken to translate the document and by the lack of funds. Activists would no doubt argue that these reasons were simply given to stall the bill. Indeed, the funds running dry occurred just before the presidential elections. The discontinuation of the educational reviews could have been a stalling tactic that was political in nature.

In this first phase of their struggle with representatives of the ministry, activists were attempting to draw attention to the bill and place pressure on the government to move it forward. In doing so, they accused the ministry of stalling the bill. This placed the ministry on the defensive, which led to many explanations for why the bill had not moved forward. Since the minister had already been on the defensive when she started her appointment, this pressure simply added fuel to fire. It was during this time period (the end of 2003 and beginning of 2004)[5] that the media began publishing articles on the "marital rape" clause within the bill.

As tensions increased between the activists and the ministry, one segment of the entire bill had gained significant prominence—sexual abuse within marriage—which the ministry and the media termed as marital rape. The debate of the passage of the bill revolved solely around this topic. Interestingly, as the ministry representative I interviewed spoke about the domestic violence bill and the government support of the bill, she shifted her attention, without any provocation, to the repeal of Section 42 (g) of the Criminal Code. In reference to this section, she said:

It says the use of force against a person may be justified on the grounds of his consent. [She proceeded to read the full section.] Now I think the general understanding is that nobody consents to violence or to assault, you know, that is not what this section is envisioning. What I believe this section is envisioning is consent to sex, to sexual intercourse, which is given when you are married . . . now what this bill is seeking to do is to repeal

this section, and by a necessary implication it means that the husband is capable of raping the wife and that is what there is all this noise about martial rape—can a husband rape the wife and can he be prosecuted for raping his wife? . . . I think generally people believe that we need a law to address violence within the home, like assault and battery, but rape within marriage is another issue. (December 14, 2004)

Clearly this segment of the domestic violence bill had been flagged by the ministry. Whereas under the Law Reform Commission employees were attempting to create a bill that would criminalize the practice of marital rape, members of the ministry were doing the opposite by suggesting that the idea of marital rape may not exist within Ghana. Moreover, the issue of marital rape had not been raised since 1999, when the bill was put on hold by the government. Interestingly, until this point in the interview, the concept of marital rape had not been addressed or brought up. The representative was simply discussing the general participation of the ministry in the development of the bill. However, she chose to focus and emphasize this one segment of the bill, and explained how the possible inclusion of marital rape within the bill was problematic. She presented this perspective as the stance of the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs. Whether or not this stance had been influenced by public opinion was not clear. On the one hand, the ministry may have taken this position according to public opinion gathered during the educational reviews. On the other hand, the ministry may have targeted this one section of the bill during their educational reviews and created the frenzy around the idea of marital rape.

In fact, the representative was pretty definitive on how the ministry viewed the idea of marital rape:

I don't know whether we should call it foreign or whatever because marital rape until recently was not part of our vocabulary. It's a new concept that is fast catching on and people believe that it has some foreign connotation . . . I want to believe that in a traditional setting when a person marries . . . the difference between a sister and a wife is that you can go to bed with your wife. So there's nothing like raping your wife in bed because you've consented to live as husband and wife. And sexual intercourse is an incidence of marriage so if we are now saying that you cannot rape your wife, your own wife, then where is this coming from? So it's an idea that someone may have come up with; whether it's foreign or it's evolved from this country is another issue. (December 14, 2004)

This representative deemed the term and practice of marital rape as foreign since it could not be translated and the topic had not previously been discussed in

Ghana. She also suggested that, within cultural understandings among Ghanaians, a man had a right to intercourse within a marriage: "There is nothing like raping your wife in bed because you've consented to live as husband and wife." According to her explanation, the idea and practice of marital rape did not exist in Ghana. This was the dominant perspective presented in the media.

The minister's stance was also evident in newspapers. When Minister Asmah left her post, she made statements that indicated that she was not in support of the bill:

> *"They [activists] want me to confront the men, but that is wrong. Do you know what will happen if women start accusing their husbands of rape and start taking them to court? It will destroy marriages and more children will be thrown on the streets. I will not encourage a law that will destroy marriages," she stressed. She noted that countries that have the Domestic Violence Law have a backlash of divorce cases and that was the last thing Ghana needed at this time of her development . . . She said, "Ghanaians must draw their identity from their culture and not copy blindly any concept that comes from the west." (Safo 2005)*

The Minister was not in full support of the bill. She viewed it as a Western concept that would destroy marriages and lead to moral decay of the larger society. She also tied the activists directly to these descriptions.

As the struggles became more intense, the activists not only had to contend with the idea of marital rape as a foreign import, they had to negotiate their own characterizations. In October 2004, members of the DV Coalition, along with other local organizations, organized a vigil and protest march to bring attention to the domestic violence bill and to violence against women more generally. After the march, Minister Asmah was quoted in the *Daily Guide Newspaper* describing the protests "'as a mercenary act by dishonest girls and women—few of whom were married before, who don't even respect their house helps but want to be seen as champions or the cause of women in this country'" (Public Agenda 2004). By creating an image of the activists in this manner, the government portrayed the organization members championing the bill as young women who did not value families and who were attempting to thrust foreign ideals upon other Ghanaians, only to destroy the fabric of life in Ghana. Because the ministry had not been supportive of the bill, and the media promoted the dialogue of the marital rape as a foreign import, the activists found themselves at a standstill.

In December of 2004, just before the presidential elections, the domestic violence bill and the issue of marital rape were at the center of media coverage. Most Ghanaians in Accra had heard of the bill and had a strong opinion for or against

it. When the bill was discussed, it was often couched in terms of cultural imperialism, which activists attempted to counter. As the respondent from WISE explained:

> *Many people say it's antifamily, antisocial, anti-men, anti-this . . . That whole expression ["marital rape"] when translated into local language doesn't fit in our culture because we have no expression for it, so it's therefore utilized for [opponents of the bill], it's definitely utilized that introducing that means international, foreign culture. And, for me, what is culture really? Culture is dynamic. (December 15, 2004)*

Domestic violence activists found it difficult to dissuade others that the idea of marital rape was a foreign import. They attempted to make the argument that culture was not a factor and that culture was dynamic. The head of the DV Coalition stated:

> *So this clause is an outdated clause that as we speak has been abolished by our colonial masters in England. And Lord Denham specifically apologized to all the former colonies who had inherited that law, so they've abandoned it . . . What the people who argue for [the clause] just forget is that this is actually a foreign law . . . The argument they have used does not make sense to me because truly that clause is a foreign clause—all you have to do is read and know the history. So maybe they say it's foreign because they're not educated, they refuse to enlighten themselves . . . I mean don't we stay in this country and import foreign things? We wear foreign clothes, so why can't we have foreign ideas? I mean if we are coming to think at it along those lines. The world is getting to be a global village and we can't say the things that affect another and another country do not affect us. That's why Ghana gets up and signs all those international treaties. So that foreign bit, excuse me to say, is a wrong starter, I mean it doesn't make sense one bit—you can't say it is foreign. (December 14, 2004)*

Along with all of the other non-governmental organization representatives, the representative for the Domestic Violence Coalition agreed that constructing marital rape as an imperial imposition was just another excuse to delay the bill. The representative for the Gender Centre summarized the situation well:

> *For me I think that the bill has been misinterpreted and may have been misconstrued by a section of the media and that has led to its status now. And it's been portrayed to be seen as anti-men and whatnot, probably because of the kind of leadership we have at the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs who seem to be brought into this media campaign on the bill. They say it's a foreign import, but their whole idea of domestic violence is that it's happening in our society or not. For me, I see it as a resistance to change.*

Anytime you're wanting change you really get people who are resistant. And it's really one of the resistances because if they say it's a foreign idea, [in] the whole of Ghanaian society most of the things are foreign . . . It's all because somebody thinks, "My position as the head or superior is being challenged," and they feel shaky and not comfortable. But if we have a leadership that is prepared to champion this and see this through all these things will die out. (December 13, 2004)

The representative of the Gender Centre explains how this has become a debate between the activists and the state. Although Minister Asmah and the ministry have become the target of the activists, the activists also recognize that it is the larger state structure that is impeding them. If the government representatives wanted to support the bill, they could influence the actions taken at the ministry. However, President Kufuor and others remained silent on the issue.

Actors within the state successfully framed the bill and the activists as foreign imports who were not concerned for the welfare of families. Although activists attempted to counter this framing by arguing that it was not an issue of culture and that the bill was created to protect the welfare of the family, their actions had limited outcomes. Moreover, because the activists and the bill were framed as foreign, the option to appeal to international supporters (suggested by most social-movement scholars as the most viable option for pressuring local governments to comply with demands) became a non-issue (Bob 2005; Keck and Sikkink 1998). The framing combined with state structures inhibited positive outcomes for the activists.

The stalemate between the government and the activists actually served to strengthen the resolve of the activists. As the interviews above suggest, the activists blamed the minister and the ministry, but they also directly blamed the government. They believed that if the government, and particularly President Kufuor, were to champion the bill, support for the bill would increase. Ultimately, they recognized that the government was a stumbling block for their goals, and this led to an increase in their collective action techniques, as well as an increase in domestic violence outreach programs. For example, when the term for the DV Coalition leader ended in 2005, some members backed a man to head the coalition. They believed that having a man at the helm would indicate that men supported the bill and would encourage more men to do so.[6] As part of their outreach programs, they targeted men and important members of the larger community, such as chiefs and queenmothers. The government may have stalled the passage of the domestic violence bill, but it simultaneously strengthened activists' commitment to the cause.

With the 2004 elections, activists went into high gear to place pressure on the government to make changes to the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. In January, President Kufuor replaced the previous minister with Hajia Alima Mahama, who had been active in the women's movement. In the beginning of Mahama's term, relations between the ministry and the activists were collegial, and the ministry invited the DV Coalition to participate in the educational reviews in the remaining five regions in Ghana. The hostility between the activists and the ministry dissipated. However, the new minister also made it clear that she was still a politician, and she had to please the president. As a member of NetRight explained:

> *Once the minister changed, people were more hopeful that, Alima, being somebody who is known as a feminist and who has worked in this movement before, would deliver more to women. For that reason there was a lot of goodwill toward her in the early days . . . Essentially Alimah is a politician like others. She may have her views as a feminist, but she has to balance her party position, the president's sensibilities, and also her relationship with the former minister . . . In the end, I think it turned out to be a disappointment . . . She would always remind us about her constraints. Eventually she came out and announced . . . she had spoken to her president about the marital rape clause and they were clear that they wanted it out and that there was nothing she could do about it . . . Finally it came to pass that they wrote in the preamble in what they sent to parliament that because of the strength of the public opinion they had to remove that [the marital rape] clause. And that was a lie, because where was that public opinion coming from? Because they weren't taking any survey or anything that we knew of. (July 25, 2006)*

Although activists worked well with the new minister, political issues and needs ultimately trumped women's concern. In the end, the President of Ghana made the final decision not to include sections that would criminalize marital rape.

The bill was sent to parliament; however, it was sent without the repeal of Section 42 (g) of the Criminal Code—even though the repeal had been the very reason for the development of the marital rape bill by the Law Reform Commission and later for the domestic violence bill. Although activists wrote an open letter to the president expressing their dismay and began targeting members of parliament to take up the issue, no changes were made. Eventually, in February 2007, the bill was passed in parliament without the repeal of Section 42 (g) and with rewording of Section 1 (b) (ii) that removed any reference to marriage. A new Section 4 was created that reads, "The use of violence in the domestic setting is not justified on the basis of consent." Unfortunately, since Section 42 (g) has not been

repealed, Section 4 simply stands in contradiction to Section 42 (g). President Kufuor and others within the state structure contributed to the successful framing process of the domestic violence bill as a foreign import and did not to allow for the repeal of Section 42 (g) of the Criminal Code.

At the same time, activists made some gains. The domestic violence bill did ultimately make it to parliament, although it took over five years of continued pressure to get it there. In addition, in June 2007, activists discovered that Section 42 (g) had silently been repealed. Justice V. C. R. A. C. Crabbe was appointed to revise all statutes of Ghana going back to the 19th century to make certain they were in line with the current constitution, as well as with international human rights laws. He repealed numerous laws, including 42 (g). Parliament had to approve the repeals; however, they were not informed of the inclusion of 42 (g). There was also no public announcement of this change. Many activists were confused by these actions. Some believe that their continued pressure and outreach programs, one of which Justice Crabbe attended, led to the change. Others remained shocked, because Crabbe had spoken publicly against the repeal of Section 42 (g). This action may represent a partial victory for activists, yet because of the way it was handled, many do not feel it is their victory.

The women's movement in Ghana emerged and consolidated in the late 1990s and early 2000. The burgeoning movement has maintained its momentum since then and continues to place pressure on the government. Members of women's organizations have put aside most of their distrust of one another in order to form coalitions and work toward similar goals. They recognized that if they wanted to create any change, they would have to work together. They further recognized that the presidential elections were an ideal time to gain publicity and place pressure on the government. In 2000, the emphasis was on the serial killings and on women's issues in general. In 2004, the emphasis was on the domestic violence bill. Members of women's organizations have made great strides since the transition to democracy, when they feared to engage the state and address any issues that may be viewed as political. Yet, despite moving beyond the fear of the authoritarian regime, despite moving beyond the distrust and competitiveness of other local non-governmental organizations, and despite uniting toward important causes, the women's movement now faces obstacles created by a new democratic government.

The democratic environment has created a new culture of politics that women must negotiate. Previously they had to overcome the fear created by the authori-

tarian regime and the distrust and competitiveness created between organizations, but now they must overcome the larger government structures and the government's agendas. They have drawn on gendered structures that have always existed, but that were temporary disabled with the authoritarian regime and the existence of the 31st December Women's movement, to create the links needed to place pressure on the government. The gendered structures proved to be a useful resource, but political structures continue to contribute to the hurdle that members of women's organizations must overcome.

Given that Ghana's political system is majoritarian, women's access to the parliament is already limited. Even if there were a strong women's movement encouraging women to run as members of parliament, the likelihood that they would be elected is still limited. Because women generally do not have access to as many resources as men to run a campaign, because women are generally not supported by their political parties as often as men, and because the general populace is more likely to vote for men than women, the representation of women within legislative bodies is lowest within majoritarian systems. In addition, with few women representatives, policies addressing women's concerns are less likely to gain support within legislative structures. Given these variables, women in Ghana, along with women in other countries with majoritarian systems, face an uphill battle when attempting to address rights issues that concern women.

Not only do activists in Ghana have to battle masculinist government structures, they also have to contend with the government's agenda. Although members of local non-governmental organizations were cohesive and active in bringing attention to the bill, their goals were not the same as the government's. The activists hoped to place pressure on the government to move the bill through parliament by publicly claiming that government was stalling. Members of the government, however, turned the tables and framed the bill as a foreign import being thrust upon the populace by "small girls" who did not value families. Although the struggle appeared originally to be between the former minister and the activists, the activists recognized that the government was supporting these actions and that President Kufuor, in particular, was not going to allow a "marital rape" clause to go before parliament. By framing the bill and the activists in this manner, the government left activists with little recourse. It prevented them from gaining support from international actors (Bob 2005). In addition, regardless of how activists attempted to reframe the bill, it did not resonate with the populace to the same degree as the state's framing (Snow and Corrigall-Brown 2005). This has not stopped the resolve of the activists, yet the outcomes demonstrate

the power of the government and its structures. The current government may no longer be authoritarian in nature, but it still uses tactics of soft repression to hinder the actions of activists (Marx Ferree 2005).

Women in Ghana are not alone in facing resistance from governments and political structures. In Kenya, the sexual offences bill went through many revisions, and much of the resistance came from male members of parliament (Odhiambo 2006). Some argued that women were shy and would not make sexual advances, so it was men's right to make sexual advances. They also reacted negatively toward a clause that would criminalize marital rape. In the media, opposition to the bill was couched in terms of "holding onto African cultures," and rejecting "alien and foreign practices." When it was finally passed, the clause on marital rape was removed. Similarly, in Botswana, a bill aimed to make marital rape illegal was thrown out in 2005 due to perceived conflict with cultural and traditional practices (Mmegi 2006). The government is now attempting to pass a new domestic violence bill that does not contain reference to marital rape, since, according to the deputy speaker, marital rape is not recognized by the laws of Botswana (Mooketsi 2007). In Malawi, the drafting of a domestic violence bill came under attack for the inclusion of marital rape. The argument against it was that the concept did not exist in Malawian culture and threatened the stability of the nation (Semu 2002). In all of these cases, the bills were framed in a manner similar to the bill in Ghana, and activists must struggle with state actors to make their gains.

Within an emerging democracy, the culture of politics is constantly changing, and women are negotiating new terrain. Preexisting gendered structures have worked in favor of Ghanaian women; unfortunately, political structures have slowed their progress. What does the future hold for women of sub-Saharan Africa? Will women be able to overcome the hindrances of political structures to continue their increased presence in formal politics?

CHAPTER SEVEN

Women on the Move

Women in sub-Saharan Africa are taking on new democratic structures with force. They are challenging governments; they are questioning policies; they are running for political positions; and some have been elected into power. They see the democratic opening as an opportunity for change, and they are running with it. The nascent democratic structures provide a new environment that allows women to mobilize and engage the government.

Women are also now turning their attention to legislative bodies in order to increase women's representation, and ostensibly their influence within formal political structures. In Ghana, women's organizations, along with other civil society groups, are actively encouraging and training women to run for district assembly elections (Asumin and Dunkwa 2006). In Zambia, President Mawanawasa's suggestion that the next president should be a woman has led to increased discussion of the need to integrate more women into formal political positions (Dale 2003). The women's movement there has backed a woman candidate for president and is appealing to women to go to the polls to support her (Fleming 2005). In Botswana, the government recently committed to double women's participation in political positions (Nyirenda 2006). In Nigeria, 600 women in the South West zone have been targeted to become actively involved in formal politics. They are being taught the art of public speaking, how to interact with media outlets, and the techniques of campaigning for political office (Akosile 2006). Women's associations in Angola met to determine how they may successfully encourage women's participation in electoral politics (Angola Press Agency 2006). Women recognize that political structures and women's representation influence any strides they hope to make in changing policy that affects women. Women con-

tinue to work within their given culture of politics and draw on existing gendered structures to transform preventative political structures.

GENDERED STRUCTURES

Many women of sub-Saharan Africa have the advantage of a history of engagement in politics prior to colonization. Women were often embedded within a dual or hierarchical gendered system in which the women's roles complemented the roles of the men (Moran 1989; Okonjo 1976; Ortner 1981). Many women held positions of authority or significantly contributed to community decisions. Even when men were the primary rulers, women in some ethnic groups would hold positions of council. Although women may not have had equal access to positions of power, they were nonetheless active and often contributed to community decisions.

Women's active participation was also based within community associations or organizations (Stamp 1986; Strobel 1976; Wipper 1982). Prior to colonization, these associations were usually organized along age or kinship lines. With colonization, some of the community associations were forced to change, yet they persisted. They simply changed their name and scope to appease the colonizers. In the 1970s and 1980s, when economic times were harder, women's organizations formed around income-generating activities. Women's associations and organizations transformed according to the times.

Within the organizations women's cohesive identity is also formed. Mary H. Moran (1989) explains how women in sub-Saharan Africa believe they are the only ones who can understand each others' grievances because of similar lived experiences. Therefore, when they confront male rulers or male offenders within the community, they do so as a group. Women believe that men must understand that the decisions they make affect all women. Women also believe that only women can truly understand and represent the needs of women. Therefore, women draw on their identities as women to act cohesively and to challenge male rulers or representatives who do not adequately address women's concerns.

Women's precolonial history of political participation, combined with active participation in local organizations and associations and their collective identity as women, form the gendered structures that women in sub-Saharan Africa currently work with. These gendered structures help women to mobilize resources. As a collective, women can work as a group to challenge individuals or political systems that overlook women. Their collective identity allows for the possibility of collective action and for the development of a larger women's movement that

works toward similar goals—such as representing women and addressing the needs and concerns of women. The gendered structures also act as a resource for women to mobilize against individuals or the state. Through associations and organizations, women can network, discuss their grievances, build on their collective identity, and mobilize to make their grievances known. Prior to colonization, women drew on these structures successfully. Unfortunately, with colonization, they proved less useful due to the implementation of foreign political structures.

POLITICAL STRUCTURES

With colonization, along with urbanization and capitalism, women in sub-Saharan Africa lost rights to land and institutional structures (Berger and White 1999; Bujra 1986; Fall 1997; O'Barr and Firmin-Sellers 1995). Many of the laws were rewritten by colonials so that land rights fell into the hands of the men. Colonials also needed civil servants to run basic government structures, and therefore provided education to men. Although women later gained access to education, their education attempted to instill gendered expectations brought from Europe. They were encouraged to cook, sew, and clean. This allowed men to hold positions within government institutions while simultaneously denying women access. In addition, when formal political institutions were constructed, male rulers were often included in the process, while female rulers were generally excluded. Colonization thus decreased women's status significantly.

With independence from colonizers, women's status did not improve much. Women often found themselves negotiating authoritarian regimes or were involved in civil strife. Under authoritarian regimes, men dominated and gained positions through bribes, money, or networks (Chazan 1989; Parpart and Staudt 1989; Tripp 1994). Women did not have access to the same amount of resources, nor to the proper networks, and the few women who did hold positions usually did so to co-opt other women into the regime. When participating in civil strife, women were often relegated to cooking and child care, although some women fought side by side with men with the hopes of gaining greater equality after the struggle ended (Urdang 1995). With the end of civil strife, however, most women found themselves contending with men and government structures that were not amenable to women's concerns. Even during spates of democratic rule, women still found themselves at a disadvantage. Democracy was often unstable, short lived, and dominated by men, and did not provide much opportunity for women or men to engage government structures due to their instability.

Although gendered structures persisted with all of these changes and the im-

plementation of colonial institutions, their impact at the national level was minimal. Colonizers used brute force to prevent women from rebelling against them, as evidenced in the Women's War in Nigeria and the Harry Thuku demonstration in Kenya (Wipper 1982; Wipper 1989). Women attempted to prevent the change of structures and demonstrate their dismay at changes made, but the repercussions of their complaints were too great. The political climate and the structures that accompanied them outweighed the gendered structures. Outcomes were not much different during periods of civil strife or authoritarianism. With civil strife, the only means that women had to engage political structures was to become involved in the conflict or to actively work toward peace, as seen in Liberia (Mikell 1995). Under authoritarian regimes, gendered structures were often coopted by the political structures. Women's community organizations would gain resources if they supported large state-run women's organizations (Ferguson et al. 1995; Manuh 1993; Staudt and Col 1991; Steady 1976; Tripp 1996; Tripp 2000; Tsikata 1989; Widner 1997). The state-run women's organizations gained support and allegiance and prevented women's organizations from using existing gendered structures against the state. The co-optation of women was compounded by fear generated by authoritarianism. Most authoritarian regimes maintained their legitimacy by instilling terror in the public through violence, which prevented individuals from challenging the state. Under authoritarianism the political structures thus tended to paralyze and neutralize the gendered structures. With the process of democratization, however, new opportunities were created for women.

DEMOCRATIZATION

The process of democratization places women at the crossroads of gendered and political structures. Assuming the transition to democracy is fairly stable and legitimate, the implementation of new political structures should create increased opportunities for women as well as men to place pressure on the government to address their concerns. Theoretically, new political opportunity creates openings for citizens to speak out against the government with little repercussions. Citizens may also lobby the government to address issues that are important to them. Popular democracy presents women with the first opportunity to properly engage the state.

The existence of the gendered structures provides women with resources to take on formal politics. Through community associations and larger formalized organizations, women can express their grievances and solidify their concerns in

order to present them within the democratized system. Women have a new opportunity, as well as resources that they are familiar with, and this combination may produce the impetus needed to catapult women into formal government and place women's concerns at the forefront of government policies.

Unfortunately, most women face political structures that are not amenable to women. Fewer women are voted into legislative bodies within plural majority systems than in proportional representation systems (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Matland 1998; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). Of the 32 sub-Saharan African countries that have undergone or are currently undergoing the transition to democracy, 18 of the countries use the plural majority system, 11 use proportional representation, and three use a combination of both plural majority and proportional representation. Within sub-Saharan Africa, the greatest representation of women within a plural majority system that does not institute any type of quota is in Mauritius, currently at 17.1 percent. Although women may actively attempt to gain women's representation within a plural majority system, their success may be limited. In a plural majority system, money and resources are needed in order to mount a campaign. This favors men, who tend to have greater access to resources given their higher social status. The general public is more likely to view men than women as good politicians, and hence more likely to vote for a man. Because of this disposition, parties are more likely to support men. Percentages of women within plural majority systems remain low worldwide, and because of the low representation of women, policies concerning women are less likely to be passed. For the most part, men do not recognize or relate to women's concerns and are thus less likely to recommend or vote for policies that affect women. Women's minimal access to government structures leaves them at a disadvantage.

This ultimately leaves women at the crossroads of gendered structures that can work to women's benefit and political structures that can hinder women's progress. The case of Ghana demonstrates how gendered and political structures have worked both for and against women in their struggle for recognition within a national political setting.

GHANA

Prior to colonization, women in Ghana held positions as queenmothers and as chiefs (Brydon 1996; Gilbert 1993; Stoeltje 1995). With colonization, they continued to hold these positions, but they were not incorporated within the formal political system, and the influence they once yielded diminished. Women's com-

munity associations and organizations also existed prior to colonization and persisted through current times (Allman and Tashjian 2000; Dolphyne 1991; Woodford-Berger 1997). The gendered network was well established and could be drawn upon. However, with colonization, women lost social, economic, and political status. They were encouraged to stay in the home, lost land rights, and were generally excluded from the market economy and political institutions. Even after the independence movement, their status did not change much due to political instability and successive authoritarian regimes. Women's historical past affects their participation in the most recent transition to democracy.

In Ghana, remnants of the authoritarian regime significantly impacted women's limited participation with the transition to democracy. Under the Provisional National Defense Council's rule, market women were targeted by the state, select individuals were executed, and most individuals learned to live in a culture of silence. Coupled with continued co-optation by the 31st December Women's Movement, a state-run women's organization, this ensured that women's actions were curtailed. Most autonomous women's associations thus chose to steer clear of formal political issues and were not actively involved in the transition process and the building of the constitution. Very few organizations began to engage formal political issues, and those that did still received threats from the 31st December Women's Movement or other branches of the government. The state thus acted as the primary vehicle prohibiting women's political activities; however, donor funding and fragmentation between organizations also contributed. Donor agencies did not offer much funding to organizations interested in good-governance programs prior to 1997. Although they provided funding to women's organizations for women's rights issues, many representatives worried that giving money for political projects, even if nonpartisan, could indicate party favoritism or create political instability. Autonomous women's organizations therefore received minimal resources to engage formal politics. In addition, most likely due to the fear instilled during the authoritarian regimes and the competitiveness created around donor funding, members of women's organizations remained distrustful of one another, and organizations would not form coalitions, although many worked toward similar goals. Thus, during the initial years of the transition to democracy, women's minimal participation in formal political structures was tied to remnants of the authoritarian regime (which neutralized autonomous women's organizations), donor agency policies (which limited access to resources), and fragmentation between autonomous women's organizations.

Nonetheless, a small percentage of women's organizations recognized the change in the political opportunity structure brought about by democratization

and chose to engage the formal politics. After the 1996 elections, members of women's organizations became bolder in criticizing the government. They recognized that other individuals were criticizing the government with minimal repercussions. At the same time, the strength of the 31st December Women's Movement was beginning to wane. Members of women's organizations recognized the opportunity that the transition to democracy had created for them and often drew on the constitution to support their agendas. Women also began to acknowledge the importance of women engaging formal political structures. They, drew on women's collective identity, as formed within the informal political institutions, and applied it to formal institutions. Women's collective identity was used as a tool to mobilize women to engage formal politics.

Their success in the mobilization process was due to focusing on their activities locally, not overtly challenging the government, and using gendered networks. Most of their activities focused on encouraging women to vote in the presidential elections. Numerous organizations incorporated new activities into their meetings—such as discussing the importance of voting and participating in community activities. Others worked within communities beyond their membership base, and some also encouraged women to stand for political positions, whether at the local or national level. The goals for most of these organizations were to encourage women to view formal politics as a means for change and also to encourage women to become actively involved in, and hence responsible for, community activities. As members mobilized women to become politically active, they emphasized the need for women in politics to represent women on the ground. The members themselves believed in the collective identity of womanhood, whereby only a woman could represent the concerns of other women. Using existing gendered networks and mobilizing women through the womanhood identity, members of women's organizations successfully transformed the political activities of Ghanaian women. Women who were members of any type of women's organizations (aside from the 31st December Women's Movement or other state-run political organizations) were more likely to have voted in the 1996 presidential elections than women who were not members of an organization. In addition, every single woman who was directly contacted by a women's organization, via door-to-door contact or via a rally, voted in the 1996 presidential election. Women were beginning to rely on existing gendered structures to encourage women to engage the formal political process. Their initial activities paid off. As members of women's organizations began to encourage women to view formal politics as a means to change, they also began socializing women to engage the state.

As the 2000 presidential elections neared, bringing the realization that President Rawlings, the former dictator, would have to step down and the 31st December Women's Movement would no longer have power, women's fear diminished and they began to publicly question the state. Access to donor funding and increased resources no doubt helped to bolster their confidence as they began to challenge the government on women's rights issues, such as violence against women. Leading up to these pivotal elections, women focused on the notion that the state was not adequately protecting women against violence, while also placing pressure on the government to take action. When members from numerous women's organizations were appalled by the lack of attention given to the spate of murders, they drew upon their established gendered networks and structures to mobilize thousands of women in demonstrations against the government. They forced the presidential candidates to address the issue and made the serial killings a primary issue for the campaign. When the election outcomes were close and runoff elections were held, members of women's organizations stepped up the pressure. Just before the 2000 elections, women had finally solidified their networks and a larger women's movement was emerging from existing gendered structures.

In 1999, and entering into 2000, members from numerous women's organizations began to form coalitions working toward specific goals—ending the serial killings, the domestic violence bill, the women's manifesto, and economic rights. They recognized that previously they had begun to form smaller organizations to address separate issues, but because they were working separately, due to financial competition and distrust, they were having minimal, if any, impact on the government. As the 2000 elections came into sight, members of different women's organizations realized that in order to create change, they needed to work together. The change in the political environment allowed women to draw on the existing gendered structures to begin engaging the state as a united front.

Unfortunately, women still found themselves embedded within a masculinist government system and working against a larger government agenda. Because the government in Ghana is based on a plural majority system, women are less likely to be voted in as parliamentarians. In Ghana, women consist of 11 percent of the parliament. There are two main problems with this type of system. First, since the government is a plural majority, even if there is a strong movement to encourage women to run for political positions, the likelihood of women gaining positions is limited. Second, given that few women hold, and that in the future only a small percentage will likely hold, parliamentary positions, the probability of bringing attention to and ultimately passing propositions, policies, and bills

that address women's concerns is also limited. Thus, even if women draw on preexisting gendered structures to build a strong and active women's movement, and the movement places pressure on the state to address gendered concerns, women are not likely to succeed unless their concerns are in line with the government's agenda. With the domestic violence bill, although a large coalition of women's groups mobilized to place pressure on the government to pass the bill, the activists, along with the bill, were framed by the government as foreign and destructive of Ghanaian culture and Ghanaian families. Although the bill was eventually passed, the segment of the bill that voided a previous criminal law that decriminalized marital rape was removed. Women's struggles against the state remain a challenge.

Members of women's organizations now find themselves in a new era. The process of democratization has opened doors for them. They are using these new opportunities to hold the government accountable for its actions. They are speaking out against the government, and they have achieved some gains. However, they are also working within the confines of imported political structures. Women's representation is minimal and thus their impact upon the government system is minimal. While gendered structures are beneficial and useful for women's mobilization, political structures create hurdles to overcome.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IN COMPARISON

In an examination of mobilization patterns of women in sub-Saharan Africa with the transition to democracy, five main patterns emerge. First, women have long-established traditions in which they either actively participated in local community politics or participated in local community associations. Participation in local community politics provided women with knowledge of and familiarity with politics, and they could transfer their knowledge to established formal institutions. Women's associations supplied the resources needed to form networks, reassert their identities as women, air grievances, and mobilize women against state structures for the purpose of addressing concerns particular to women. Although there are women's organizations outside of Africa, most do not derive from the strong historical foundations that allowed collective identities to form around women representing women in Africa. For example, organizations in Eastern Europe and Latin America did not exist cohesively through period transformations (Jaquette and Wolchik 1998). In addition, when women's organizations in Eastern Europe and Latin America mobilized around certain identities, the identities tended to be dependent on context—for example, women present-

ing themselves as mothers in Latin America during authoritarian rule (Alvarez 1990; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Noonan 1995; Ray and Korteg 1999; Schild 1995; Stephen 1997). In sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, women's participation in local community groups existed and thrived during precolonial times, and women relied on the idea that only women can understand the situation of women and used this collective identity to further their causes. In sub-Saharan Africa, dual and hierarchical gendered structures significantly shaped women's mobilization efforts with the transition to democracy.

Second, most women transitioning away from authoritarian regimes had to overcome the fear instilled through the regime and also disengage from the larger state-run women's organizations. Of the 31 countries that have democratized or are currently democratizing, 22 made the transition directly from authoritarian rule, five made the transition from civil strife, and six made the transition from a combination of civil strife and authoritarian rule. As is the case in Ghana, the vast majority of sub-Saharan African countries are negotiating the transition to democracy from an authoritarian regime and must contend with the fear that accompanies the transition.

In many African countries, large state-run women's organizations have confined women's activities. For example, in Malawi, authoritarian leader Banda had control of the Women's League and instituted the "*mbumba* culture," which co-opted women to support his government. This practice continued with the transition to democracy and hindered women from mobilizing against the state (Semu 2002). In Kenya, under Moi's rule in the 1980s, the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake's executive committee was dissolved and placed under control of the government, becoming a tool to co-opt women for the purpose of supporting the government. With the introduction of a multiparty clause, more women's organizations began to form, and some slowly began to tackle political issues (House-Midamba 1996). As in Ghana, though, it was a slow process. In Mali, under the authoritarian regime in the 1980s, the Union National des Femmes du Mali co-opted women to support the government and created a sense of political distrust among women. Although the organization was disbanded with the transition to democracy, the distrust of political institutions and of women in politics remained (Wing 2002). In Zambia, the Women's League was created to help men achieve political positions and with democratization tried to thwart the activities of the National Women's Lobby Group—a bipartisan group that attempted to help women gain political positions (Geisler 2006). Similar women's organizations existed in Nigeria, Niger, Eritrea, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone (Tripp 2003b). In all of these cases, many women found themselves in a situation in which they had

to either support the authoritarian regime in order to gain resources or remain silent to avoid repercussions. The large state-run organizations hindered women from mobilizing with democratization. The previous structures under authoritarian regimes remained, continued the co-optation of women, and created enough intimidation to prevent women from mobilizing.

Unlike Latin American and Eastern European women, sub-Saharan African women often found themselves still negotiating remnants of a regime that prevented them from drawing on their own organizations to mobilize against the state (Jaquette and Wolchik 1998). In Latin America, most women faced the threat of authoritarian regimes through demonstrations and direct confrontation before the transition to democracy, and, thus, most fear was overcome before the transition began. In Eastern Europe, the governments collapsed, and those in power lost their positions. Certainly women had to negotiate new political systems and past experiences, which influenced their decisions and activities with democratization, but they did not have to contend with the same machineries that neutralized women's organization as in sub-Saharan Africa nor with regimes that often carried over into the democratic setting.

Third, through a combination of a more open political environment along with more access to donor funding, members of women's organizations were able to take new bold steps to set up organizations that addressed women's rights that would previously not have been acceptable under an authoritarian regime. Although most of these organizations still ran separately from one another, they were nonetheless beginning to address concerns that had been taboo. Members of these organizations were starting to gain more autonomy separate from the government and beginning to challenge policies and practices put forth by the government.

A change in political opportunity structures usually has an impact on women's behavior. However, how political opportunity shapes behavior is dependent on the environment. For example, in Eastern Europe, many women chose to disengage from the state and politics (Jaquette and Wolchik 1998). In Latin America, women also engaged the state; yet, because their united front dissipated with the transition to democracy, their goals were unclear and often led to fragmentation and struggles between women's groups (Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Ray and Korteg 1999; Schild 1995; Stephen 1997). In many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, because the mobilization process was slow and involved overcoming fears, women's organizations gradually gained strength and eventually overcame much of their fragmentation to form a united force.

Fourth, as women gained distance from authoritarian rule, and as the emerg-

ing democracy appeared more legitimate, many women began to work together by forming coalitions to work collectively in pressuring respective governments for change. Whereas women in Latin America faced divisions within their once unified movements, and women in Eastern Europe withdrew from the public sphere, women of sub-Saharan Africa started at the grassroots to eventually foster trust among organizations and build national networks between them. The creation of coalitions is central to gaining more influence and rights regardless of geographical location. In sub-Saharan Africa, women hoped to increase their strength and bring about change through alliances.

Unfortunately, many still have to contend with the final pattern they face—imported masculinized political institutions, which can also be found in Latin America and Eastern Europe, as well as other parts of the world. Women are making inroads based on their previous histories and drawing on their current resources. Yet the political structures still create challenging obstacles for women to overcome. Women in southern African countries find themselves at some advantage if they live in nations that have signed on to the Southern African Development Community protocol, which initially pushed for women's representation in government to reach a minimum of 30 percent and now aims for 50 percent. Through this protocol, the representation of women in southern Africa is increasing and reaching this mark. In Mozambique, South Africa, and Tanzania women's representation is above 30 percent. In Uganda it is 29.8 percent, in Namibia it is 27 percent, and in the Seychelles it is 23.5 percent (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2007). With increased representation within a democratic environment and a strong cohesive women's movement, women have the chance to transform policies. However, given that most countries use the plural majority system, and that women's representation will thus be limited even in countries where a strong women's movement has emerged and women are actively engaging the state, their progress in influencing policies affecting women will most likely be curtailed. In countries like Ghana, Kenya, and Mali where women are active yet their representation is low, if there are no changes made to government structures, women will be less likely to make gains.

THE FUTURE

As Ghana democratized, the primary obstacles that prevented women from initially engaging formal politics were fear remaining from the authoritarian regime, the existence of a large state-run women's organization, limited access to donor funding, and divisions and fragmentation between and within women's

organizations. Members of women's organizations were nonetheless able to overcome these obstacles. They recognized the democratic political environment as an opportunity to demand rights by referring to the constitution and holding the government accountable for its actions. Women's resources improved with increased access to donor funding starting in 1997, strengthening their organizational structures, agendas, and activities. Focusing on a collective identity of women representing women, members used their knowledge of informal political structures as well as existing women's groups to socialize women to view formal politics as one way to improve their rights. Building on this foundation, they drew on their gendered networks to gain support from women when the serial killings started. Although slow in the beginning, women's political mobilization took off as they began to draw on democratic tenets, donor agency resources, and, most importantly, existing gendered structures.

Now women find themselves at a crossroads. On the one hand, their preexisting gendered structures allowed women to reclaim political space. On the other hand, the current masculinist political structures and agendas they are up against place them at a disadvantage. Perhaps, though, women's strength in their preexisting gendered organizations will allow them to persevere despite the hindrances they face. Given that it is the first time since the precolonial era that women may become active in politics, women may indeed capture the democratic opportunity. Because of women's familiarity with and participation in informal political systems and their ongoing participation in women's groups, women may find some way to draw on their current culture of politics to overcome the challenges placed before them.

In Ghana, for example, ABANTU for Development researched what factors led to increased women's political participation in sub-Saharan Africa. Members learned that countries that had created and upheld a women's manifesto were most successful in gaining women's entry into political positions. With the creation of their own Women's Manifesto for Ghana, ABANTU for Development, along with other members from the Women's Manifesto Coalition, are demanding responsibility from political parties. They are arguing for the implementation of affirmative action measures to increase women's parliamentary, district assembly, and party executive positions. They further plan on revisiting their demands after each election and on holding government officials accountable for outcomes. Through the networks women have established, they have the presence to be heard. They can no longer be ignored. Current political structures may slow women down, but they have not destroyed their resolve.

As women move away from authoritarian regimes and political instability, de-

mocratization gives them the boldness needed to take on government structures and agendas. Women are building on their boldness, reclaiming their political space, using existing gendered structures, and actively confronting political institutions and agendas. As sub-Saharan African women enter politics with force, they are demanding change, and to some degree, they are succeeding. Despite persistent obstacles, women now face the future with optimism. As one women's organization member firmly stated, "Our time has come" (July 25, 2006).

APPENDIX A

Methods

Through my informal contacts and my participation in meetings, conferences, and workshops, I was able to contact women in Accra who were willing and interested in participating in interviews. The interviews were conducted in English with individual respondents, except for one.* In most of the situations, we were in private rooms with minimal interruptions. This allowed women to focus their attention on our conversations with few distractions. Many interviews took place in their offices or homes, and some were conducted just outside of their homes, so the women could continue selling goods while speaking with me. Some women simply would not have been able to be interviewed if they could not have worked during this time.

During the interviews, I asked the women to tell the story of how they first heard of their organization, how they became involved, and what activities they had been involved in since they joined. As the respondents discussed their participation within the organizations, they were able to tell a story or give a narrative. I would then build off the story and ask questions in relation to the narrative they provided. I would listen to intonations or hesitations to determine what was important to the respondents, and then I would formulate follow-up questions according to the knowledge they had already provided.

In the beginning, I wanted them to explain their role in and attachment to their organization. In most cases, the interviews began on technical notes as the women spoke of how they became exposed to the organization, when they began to participate, and the framework of their organization. During this narrative, I would probe for additional information, and I would eventually transition into

* Three members of one organization chose to interview together because of time constraints and because they knew each other well. As a group, they bounced ideas off each other and renegotiated statements.

asking about the democratization process. Often, the respondents would tie the democratization process to discussions of the activities their organizations were involved in. If they did not, I specifically asked if they felt that the transition to democracy changed their organization's activities and whether they had begun to address women's rights at the national level. In addition to the respondents recounting their activities, they discussed whether their organization began to address women's citizenship rights with democratization and what obstacles they faced in their efforts.

I gathered 39 in-depth interviews with women from different women's organizations. These interviews helped to shape the questions for my survey. The survey also helped to shape later interviews. I maintained contact with all of the respondents so that I could ask follow-up questions and remain aware of their activities. After I collected each interview, I reviewed the interview that day and wrote a summary report of the conversation. I also wrote notes about the general environment of the interview and examined what patterns emerged. As I began to collect more interviews, patterns became more apparent, and these helped to guide me for future interviews. During the interview process, I experienced limited obstacles, since my informal contacts provided me with a fairly easy access to members. However, I did have to contend with two minor obstacles.

The first hurdle that I faced involved learning the correct vocabulary to address political topics during the interviews. I learned that I could not simply ask about politics. As soon as I used the word *politics,* respondents reacted quite strongly and negatively. They were quick to say that their organizations had nothing to do with politics, and they kept their distance from politics. However, if I reframed the questions to ask if their organizations were involved in the electoral process or if they lobbied the government regarding women's issues, they would become more animated and inform me of activities that their organization was involved in. I came to realize that "politics" was associated with the Provisional National Defense Council, which was in power prior to the transition. These women did not want their organizations to be seen as affiliated with a political party or to be viewed as similar to the 31st December Women's Movement. In addition, the idea of politics was tied to violence, as experienced under the PNDC and other regimes. Yet, the idea of elections appeared to be viewed as a positive opportunity for individuals, so members did not hesitate to discuss these issues. In order to successfully conduct my interviews, I needed to become familiar with their communicative speech patterns.

The second obstacle that I faced related to age and status. When I started my research in Ghana, I thought one primary obstacle that I would have to overcome would be my race and nationality. In particular, I thought I might receive resistance based on the fact that I was a white woman coming from the United States to conduct interviews. The women had knowledge that I hoped to gain access to, and I had little to offer in return. The women who gave me their time, did so out

of trust, and I greatly appreciated the time and information they provided me. In the end, my greatest challenge turned out not to be my foreign status, but my age. Because I was a younger woman who was not yet a faculty member at a university, many women did not want to give up their valuable time for my interests. In particular, older well-established women did not want to meet with me. Even when I persisted, they would often not show for the interview. Of course, not all older well-established women behaved this way, and I did have some excellent respondents, but some made it more challenging. I found it easier to conduct interviews with younger women, and it was in these interviews that I discovered that age divisions could be problematic for Ghanaian women, as well as for myself.

In analyzing the interviews, I used the grounded theory method to examine patterns in the data (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Upon my return, I had the tape-recorded interviews transcribed. This allowed me to thoroughly examine the taped interviews and the handwritten interviews (which were also typed) for reoccurring patterns. Most of the women spoke about similar themes. For example, the issue of lack of funding for their programs emerged time and time again, as did obstacles created by the state. Obviously, these situations and events affected the activities of the organizations. Additional patterns that referred specifically to the transition to democracy also emerged.

Surveys

URBAN

In order to supplement the interviews and determine whether the activities of women's organizations had an impact on the political behavior of women, I conducted 621 surveys among Ghanaian women. Of the 621 surveys, 305 were conducted in the capital city of Accra, and 316 were conducted in rural towns located in the Central Region of Ghana. I chose the Central Region because some women's organizations had been active in this area. By concentrating on this region, I hoped to determine whether their activities had any effect on women in the area. In addition, the International Federation of Electoral Systems had conducted a study on attitudes toward politics and found that those living in the Central Region were more cynical toward formal politics than citizens in the rest of Ghana. Therefore, I believed that if women's organizations did influence the political behavior of women in this region, they may have similar effects in other regions.

I began by constructing the survey according to the interview material that I received. Most importantly, I asked questions that did not specifically use the word *politics,* due to the reactions I had received from interview participants. In addition, I asked individual survey participants specific organization-activity questions to determine whether the activities that the organizations were in-

volved in matched the activities the survey respondents were involved in. After determining the themes of the surveys, I consulted two professors at the University of Ghana, Legon for feedback on question construction and the organization of topics. Overall, the survey had three main sections:

1. *Background information on the individual:* age, sex, ethnic group, economic class, educational level, employment, etc.
2. *Extent to which respondent participates in the formal political structure:* running for regional or national positions, voting activity in national and regional elections, participation in women's organizations, etc.
3. *Knowledge and perceptions of women's organizations:* awareness of organizations, perceptions of activities presented by organizations, influence of organizations on others, small or large presence of organizations, approval or disapproval of organizations, whether they are members of organizations, etc.

The first section addresses whether or not women's organizations are representative and whether certain types of women are more likely to vote in elections. The second section asks if women are beginning to engage the state by voting or becoming active in other political activities, and this information can easily be tied to whether women's organizations have any influence on political participation. The third section examines whether organizations encourage women to participate in the formal political process and also shows how organizations are presenting their interests to the government. This section allows the analysis of what types of contributions these women's organizations are making within a democratic transition and whether women believe women's organizations have any influence on the government.

After constructing the surveys according to the information I had gathered from the interviews and consulting with professors, I hired two research assistants in Accra and formally trained them. One research assistant had a degree in journalism, and the other was working toward a degree in economics. I felt it necessary to hire women to conduct the surveys. If the interviewers had been men, they may have created a power imbalance or a sense of intimidation when asking women whether they voted in the election, since there are high expectations for men to participate and lower expectations for women.

For the training process, I sat with the research assistants and the trainer for one week, going through each question. We needed to determine how to correctly translate the meanings into Twi and Ga, the predominant languages spoken in Accra. I spoke some Twi, so I could help with those translations, and once they were trained, the assistants could easily translate the meaning into Ga. In December 1997, we began to conduct pre-tests in Osu, a neighborhood in Accra that is predominantly Ga but contains some different ethnic groups. Through the pretests, we were able to determine which questions were problematic so that we

could change them. We conducted a total of 117 pre-tests, which consisted of three different versions of the survey. The last version posed no visible problems. Thus, we began to conduct the surveys in Accra in January.

A stratified random sample was conducted based on level of income to determine if there may be different outcomes (i.e., membership in women's organizations, or political participation) according to class. In Accra, I sampled from an upper- (Cantonments), middle- (Kaneshi), and lower-income-level (Nima) neighborhood. Each neighborhood constituted a stratum in the survey and consisted of mixed ethnic groups, which was important because Accra is a multiethnic city. On most occasions I accompanied the assistants, and I surveyed the respondents with one assistant present. Before we collected the surveys in each neighborhood, I explored the area and created grids in order to incorporate residents from each section of the neighborhood. We then collected a random sample by going to every third house. Although I had considered conducting the random sample according to house numbers, I realized after consulting professors at the University of Ghana that this would be difficult if not impossible. The house numbers were continually changing, there was no organization that had records of all present house numbers, and some Ghanaians (especially in Nima) had no house numbers. We also collected the surveys during different times of the day—some in the morning, some in the afternoon, and some in the evening—to be certain to be inclusive of all women, some of whom may not be in their homes at certain times due to employment or other reasons.

Because the women who agreed to participate in the survey gave some of their time to help me, I felt I needed to give them something in return to show my thanks, preferably something small but useful. After speaking with my informal contacts, I decided to give each participant some soap, which could be used for dishes or clothing. I found that most women did not expect to receive anything in return for their participation, so they often said it was not necessary, but they would take the soap and appeared appreciative. This small token symbolized my gratitude.

RURAL

A similar approach to the surveys was taken in the rural areas. I hired two research assistants in the Central Region who had completed their O-levels (similar to achieving a high school degree), and I hired one of the research assistants from Accra to train them. This assured uniformity in the application of the surveys. Once I hired the research assistants and had planned the training sessions, I began to narrow down the towns that I would survey in the area. My base was in Saltpond, which is a larger town. I asked people in the area about the surrounding towns, and I quickly learned the transportation system. I began to explore the towns and made contact with their chiefs. Some of these towns were on

the main road that connected Accra to Cape Coast. Others were a mile or two from the main road and only accessible by foot. In each town, I would first locate the chief, give the chief a bottle of schnapps, and explain my mission. The chief owns all the land of the town, and he determines what activities may take place there. Therefore, it was important for me to receive his approval before conducting surveys in the area. The schnapps was given out of respect to the chief and the ancestors of the village. After I met with the chief and explained my mission, he would inform me of a date upon which I should return. The towns chosen for the surveys included Abonko, Kuntu, Obidan, Kormantse, Howadze, Abandze, Egyaa, Ewuya, and Anokye.

In most cases, I returned one week later with my research assistants. The chief would call a meeting for the women of the town to come. During this meeting, he would introduce me and my research assistants, and he would explain that he had given me permission to conduct surveys in the area. At this point, the women were free to ask me any questions that were of concern to them. Most women wanted to know what my research was, what I was interested in, what I hoped to find out, how I would conduct the surveys, why they should participate, and what they would get out of their participation. I carefully explained how I was interested in the activities of women's organizations, whether they believed women's organizations were important to them, and whether women's organizations were encouraging to women to vote in the elections. I explained that the information I retrieved would offer insight into the operations of women's organizations in Ghana, whether they were successful, and how this may explain the means by which activities of women's organizations could be improved. I also made certain that they knew that they had the option to participate, that the surveys would be anonymous, and that their participation would not be known to others.

The surveys were stratified according to wealth indicators. In order to determine the level of wealth of a respondent, criteria such as presence of electricity and type of walls and windows in the home were used. For example, some respondents had mud walls and others had cement walls. Some had thatched roofs and others had tin roofs. This allowed me to divide the respondents into high-, middle-, and low-income groups. These surveys were begun in March and continued through May.

Once I collected all of the surveys, I entered the results into Microsoft Excel the same week they were collected. If I noted that the research assistants missed a question or a page, I would have them return to the respondent to discover the answers. Although we did not record the names of the respondents, we did record the house location so that we could find the respondent for follow-up purposes. These house descriptions were only familiar to the assistants and me. Other individuals would not have the ability to locate the houses from our records. Upon my return to the United States, I transferred the data to the statistical program

STATA, and I cleaned the data to make certain everything was in order. I could then use the data to run multivariate regressions to determine whether women's organizations influenced the political behavior of their members and other women. My survey data provides an opportunity to directly gauge the impact of women's organizations on women's political participation.

APPENDIX B

Survey Data

Analyses of the survey data allow exploration of the effects of mobilization efforts by women's organizations. I present descriptive statistics in Table B.1 and logistic regressions of voting behavior on selected independent variables in Table B.2.

Key Variables

Voting Behavior in 1996 Elections (Vote '96)*: The dependent variable is whether the respondent voted (coded as 1) or not (0) in the 1996 elections. As expected, the respondents overreported on the voter turnout questions, but only by 8%.** Other studies of voter turnout indicate that the overestimation should affect the intercept only and not the causal patterns in the multivariate regression equations (e.g., Hout, Brooks, and Manza 1995).

Member of a women's organization: This dichotomous variable (member of a

* The only elections held leading up to the transition to democracy were the 1988/89 district council elections. With the transition to democracy, the first presidential and parliamentary elections were held in 1992 (the last parliamentary elections had been held in 1979). In 1992, the presidential election turnout was only 50.2%, in which 48.8% of the registered voters were women. (Approximately 50.6% of the population are women.) The turnout for the parliamentary elections was only 29%. In 1996, the presidential election turnout was 79% (Badu and Larvie, n.d.). Although there are no statistics on the number of women who voted in the 1992 or 1996 elections, the International Federation of Electoral Systems in Ghana contends that approximately half of the voters who turned out in 1996 were women.

**Self-reported voting can be problematic. In the United States, overreporting has ranged from 6.2% to 11.6% in current population surveys. (See Jennings 1990.) The main cause for overreporting is thought primarily to be misreporting by the respondents. The estimate of overreporting in Ghana is based on the statistics presented by the Electoral Commission in Ghana (Badu and Larvie, n.d.).

TABLE B.1.

Means, Standard Deviations, and Descriptions of Variables in Study (N = 621)

Variable	Description	Metric	Mean	SD
Key political and organizational variables				
Vote 1996	Voted in 1996 presidential election	0 = did not vote 1 = voted	0.87	0.33
Member of a women's organization	Member of any women's organization	0 = not member 1 = member	0.40	0.49
Contact with a women's organization	Women's organization contacted respondent about 1996 elections	0 = not contacted 1 = contacted	0.05	0.22
Vote 1992	Women who voted in the 1992 elections	0 = did not vote 1 = voted	0.73	0.44
Personal characteristics				
Age	Age of respondent	Years	39.54	14.35
Education	Educational level of respondent	1 = no education to 0 = post-university	3.30	2.18
Employed	Respondent is employed	0 = not employed 1 = employed	0.76	0.43
Community participation	Respondent participates in community activities	0 = does not participate 1 = participates	0.10	0.31
Family characteristics				
Children	Number of children respondent has	Children	3.25	2.41
Living with husband	Respondent is living with husband	0 = not living with husband 1 = living with husband	0.50	0.50
Co-wife	Respondent is a co-wife	0 = not co-wife 1 = co-wife	0.13	0.33
Living in urban area	Respondent lives in urban area	0 = lives in rural area 1 = lives in urban area	0.49	0.50
Income level				
Low income	Respondent lives in low-income area	Reference category	0.35	0.48
Middle income	Respondent lives in middle-income area	0 = does not live in middle-income area 1 = lives in middle-income area	0.34	0.48
High income	Respondent lives in high-income area	0 = does not live in high-income area 1 = lives in high-income area	0.31	0.46
Religious affiliation				
Muslim	Respondent is Muslim	Reference category	0.15	0.36
Christian	Respondent is Christian	0 = not Christian 1 = Christian	0.73	0.44
Other religion	Respondent is a religion other than Muslim or Christian	0 = not other religion 1 = other religion	0.12	0.32

TABLE B.2.
Logistic Regression Coefficients of Voting in 1996 on Membership, Personal Characteristics, Family Characteristics, Income Levels, and Religious Affiliation

Independent variables	(Model 1)	(Model 2)	(Model 3)	(Model 4)	(Model 5)
Member of women's organization	0.769**	0.815**	0.943**	0.855**	0.675*
	(0.284)	(0.282)	(0.284)	(0.294)	(0.313)
Personal characteristics					
Age	0.021*	———	———	0.008	−0.014
	(0.010)	———	———	(0.011)	(0.011)
Education	0.022	———	———	0.002	−0.067
	(0.060)	———	———	(0.084)	(0.091)
Employed	0.493	———	———	0.374	0.051
	(0.267)	———	———	(0.280)	(0.304)
Community participation	0.088	———	———	0.051	−0.008
	(0.430)	———	———	(0.439)	(0.472)
Family characteristics					
Children	———	0.166**	———	0.131	0.081
	———	(0.061)	———	(0.076)	(0.075)
Living with husband	———	0.716**	———	0.736**	0.580*
	———	(0.268)	———	(0.275)	(0.294)
Co-wife	———	0.093	———	0.121	−0.101
	———	(0.415)	———	(0.423)	(0.451)
Living in urban area	———	0.324	———	0.451	0.979**
	———	(0.268)	———	(0.343)	(0.374)
Income level[a]					
Middle income	———	———	0.115	0.330	0.288
	———	———	(0.329)	(0.349)	(0.381)
High income	———	———	−0.346	−0.200	−0.231
	———	———	(0.324)	(0.354)	(0.389)
Religious affiliation[b]					
Christian	———	———	−0.189	0.034	0.207
	———	———	(0.394)	(0.408)	(0.444)
Other	———	———	0.031	0.416	0.472
	———	———	(0.489)	(0.530)	(0.559)
Vote 1992	———	———	———	———	2.245**
	———	———	———	———	(0.318)
Constant	0.446	0.714**	1.830**	0.040	−0.014
Log likelihood	−226.733	−220.606	−191.928	−217.353	−189.789
BIC	−3501.802	−3514.056	−3496.172	−3469.118	−3517.807
N	621	621	621	621	621

Notes: *p ≤ .05, two-tailed test; **p ≤ .01, two-tailed test. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.
[a]Omitted category is low income.
[b]Omitted category is Muslim.

women's organization = 1) includes women who are members of women's organizations that are *not* tied to the state. Respondents were asked to list whether they were members of a women's organization and to specify the organization to which they belonged. Since some women's organizations focused on nonpartisan political issues, the expectation was that members of these organizations would be more likely to vote in the 1996 elections. In addition, women who are

members of women's community associations or organizations that focus on income-generating activities are active outside the home and most likely interested in social, economic, or political issues. Membership in such organizations also indicates social connectedness. Therefore, I assume women who are members of a women's organization are more likely to vote.

Contact with a women's organization: This is a dichotomous variable (respondent has had contact with a women's organization that encouraged her to participate in the elections = 1). This measure of contact includes only organizations that have no ties to the state. Excluding government organizations from this variable allows me to establish the effectiveness of organizations that worked separately from the 31st December Women's Movement and any other state organizations. The respondents were asked if any women's organization contacted them directly about participating in the formal political process. If they responded positively, they were asked which organization contacted them. The women's organizations that respondents mentioned included both indigenous community associations and national organizations. Women may have established contact by attending a meeting the women's organization held in their village or neighborhood, or they may have established contact when a member from a women's organization came to their door to discuss the formal political process.

Independent Variables

I include additional independent variables to determine if there are other factors that led women to participate in the 1996 presidential elections and whether the effect of contact is a function of other variables. The variables I use are typically used for voter turnout or voter behavior studies (Catt 1996; Niemi and Weisberg 1993).

Age: Age in years is included to determine whether older women, who tend to be more active in social activities, are more likely to participate in elections, as suggested by earlier research (Filer, Kenny, and Morton 1993).

Education: Education is coded in categories. Because Ghana has changed educational systems over the past few decades, the number of years the respondent has attended school could indicate different educational levels. Thus, this variable is categorized by levels of education: no education = 1, some primary = 2, primary = 3, some secondary = 4, secondary = 5, certificate training = 6, university = 7, and post-university = 8. Studies have indicated that increased education leads to greater knowledge of or participation in organizations (Dicklitch 1998; Hirschmann 1994; Matiwana and Walters 1986). Increased knowledge of political issues gained through education generally leads to increased voter turnout (Powell 1980, 1986).

Employment: This dichotomous variable (respondent employed = 1) is included on the assumption that women who are active in the economy and out-

side the home are more likely to vote (Beckwith 1986). Although employment patterns in sub-Saharan Africa differ from those in North America and Europe, employment may still be an indicator of voting behavior and is therefore included.

Community participation: This dichotomous variable (participated in community activities = 1) is included on the assumption that women who are active in the community are more likely to vote. Locality (Catt 1996) and community (Ardrey 1994) or organizational activities have been found to influence voting behavior in other countries. Community participation includes attending town/neighborhood meetings, cleaning the town or neighborhood, or participating in other town/neighborhood decisions or activities.

Number of children: This variable is included under the assumption that the more children a woman has, the more likely she will participate in community activities, possibly including voting. Although previous studies in the United States indicate that the number of children a woman has does not increase women's political participation (Beckwith 1986), this may not be the case in sub-Saharan Africa. Once a woman has a child, she gains status and respect within the community. This status and respect may make her more likely to become involved in community activities. Moreover, through her child's schooling and other activities, the mother would be drawn into more community affairs.

Living with husband: This dichotomous variable (respondent living with her husband = 1) is included since research in developed countries indicates that marital status, as an indicator of social connectedness, influences political participation (Timpone 1998). Individuals who are married are more likely to vote. Since marital status does not necessarily indicate whether spouses are living together in Ghana, living with husband is used as an indicator of social connectedness.

Co-wife: Although previous studies have indicated that married couples are more likely to vote in elections, co-wives generally do not live with their husbands, and the social connection between husband and co-wife is usually not as strong. I include this dichotomous variable (respondent is a co-wife = 1) to determine if lifestyle affects the likelihood of a woman voting.

Living in urban/rural areas: Studies have indicated that place of residence influences voting behavior (Catt 1996; Niemi and Weisberg 1993). Thus, I include a dichotomous residence variable (living in an urban area = 1). Women living in urban areas have greater access to the media and organizational information and thus would more likely participate in elections.

Living in low-income, middle-income, or high-income areas: Studies suggest organizations reach individuals with middle- and upper-class backgrounds (Carroll 1992; Dicklitch 1998; Dolphyne 1991; Hirschman 1994; Sarch 1993). Income has also been found to affect voting behavior—those in higher income classes are more likely to vote (Catt 1996; Niemi and Weisberg 1993). Therefore, a dummy

variable series (high income = 1, middle income = 1, low income as the referent category) is included. In the rural areas, the surveys were stratified according to wealth indicators. In Accra, I sampled from an upper-, middle-, and lower-income-level neighborhood.

Christian, Moslem, and other religion: These dichotomous variables (Christian = 1, other religion = 1, Moslem as the referent category) are included to determine if religion has an effect on voting behavior. Although women from all religious backgrounds are equally expected to participate in women's organizations, their actual electoral participation is unknown.

Voted in 1992 elections: This variable is problematic since respondents were asked to report whether they voted in the 1992 elections in 1997, one year after the 1996 elections. The results are affected mostly by memory of the respondents. As in the self-reported vote in the 1996 elections, the respondents overreported their participation. However, in this case, they overreported by 23%.* I include this dichotomous variable (voted in the 1992 elections = 1) to examine variations in voting patterns between the 1992 and the 1996 presidential elections.

Effect of Voting in 1996 Presidential Elections

Analyses of the survey data allow exploration of the effects of mobilization efforts by women's organizations. The dependent variable, voted in the 1996 presidential elections, is skewed (approximately 87% of the respondents voted in that election), limiting the number of independent variables that can be included in the models. The first three models include membership in a women's organizations with controls for three separate sets of variables: (1) personal characteristics, (2) family characteristics, and (3) income level and religious affiliation.

Membership in a women's organization is significant in all three models. As expected, members of women's organizations are more likely to vote than nonmembers. In the first model, age is also significant. Older women are more likely than younger women to vote. As women become older, they gain status from their historical knowledge of the community, and they may be more likely to take part in political processes and serve as role models for others (Fallon 1999). That education does not significantly affect voting may seem surprising, but this is in line with crossnational research on the aggregate level (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance 1997).

In the second model, the number of children a woman has and residence with her husband are significant. The more children a woman has, the more likely she

*I recognize that the overreporting in the 1992 elections is extremely high. This is primarily due to the fact that the respondents were asked five years after those elections, and after they actually voted in the 1996 elections. However, I include this variable for the purpose of giving general insight into voting patterns in 1992 and 1996.

is to vote, and women who live with their husbands are more likely to vote than those who do not. Women who have children are more respected (Dolphyne 1991; Fallon 1999; Odaga and Heneveld 1995; Oppong and Abu 1987), and they may become more involved in the community as their children attend school. Clark (2000) argues that one of the main concerns of mothers is the well-being of their children. Thus, women may vote to promote their children's welfare. In fact, approximately 20% of the respondents mentioned the future of their children as one of the primary reasons they voted in the 1996 presidential elections. They wanted increased educational and employment opportunities and a better standard of living for their children.

There are two possible reasons why women who live with their husbands are more likely to vote than women who do not. First, studies done in the United States and Europe suggest that individuals who are more socially connected, particularly individuals who are married, are more likely to vote in elections (Timpone 1998). This may also be the case in Ghana. Second, the in-depth interviews with members of women's organizations suggest that women might be influenced by their husbands or male relatives to vote in the elections:

> *Women in this country, the majority of them, vote for their husbands. Their brothers or their male relatives tell them to vote.*

> *[Women] shouldn't let somebody take their power from them. You know, maybe I'm a husband, you are a wife, and I belong to party, then you also belong to party. The husband will force the wife to belong to the same party.*

That women who live with their husbands are more likely to vote lends some credence to these explanations.

In the third model, neither income nor religion is significant. In all three models, however, women who were members of women's organizations were more likely to vote in the 1996 presidential elections, supporting the theory that such organizations mobilize women to participate in the formal political process. Moreover, in Model 4, when all of the independent variables are included, membership continues to be significant, and the only other variable significantly affecting vote is residence with husband.

In Model 5, vote in the 1992 presidential election is added to take into account women's propensity to vote. Women living in urban areas probably have greater access than rural women to information about elections, as well as greater access to voting polls. Yet even when voting patterns from the previous election are accounted for, the variable for members of women's organizations remains significant.

TABLE B.3.
Logistic Regression Coefficients of Contact with a Women's Organization on Voter Turnout 1992, and Voter Turnout 1996 on Contact with a Women's Organization

	Dependent variables	
Independent variables	Contact with a women's organization (Model 1)	Vote 1996 (Model 2)
Contact with a women's organization	———	([a])**
Vote 1992	0.968	———
	(0.542)	———
Constant	−3.695**	1.865**
Log likelihood	−124.080	−232.157

Notes: *p ≤ .05, two-tailed test; **p ≤ .01, two-tailed test. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

[a]Contact with a women's organization predicted success perfectly; thus, 32 observations were dropped from regression.

Contact with a Women's Organization

These patterns can be explored further by examining the voting patterns among women who were directly contacted by women's organizations and encouraged to participate in the formal political process, as found in Table B.3.

All of the women who reported they were contacted by a women's organizations and encouraged to vote voted in 1996, suggesting that such contact does make a difference in women's electoral participation. Contact with a women's organization is regressed on vote in Model 1. In order to determine whether contact with a woman's organization had any influence on voting behavior, I wanted first to determine whether women who were contacted by a woman's organizations were already more likely to vote. The results in Model 1 indicate that women who voted in 1992 were no more likely to be contacted to vote in 1996. In Model 2, I regress vote in the 1992 election on contact with a women's organization. However, because *every* women contacted by a women's organizations voted in the 1996 elections, contact with a women's organization cannot be included in the logistic regression model.

Effects of Voting Inclusive of Contact with a Women's Organization

Finally, in Table B.4, I present one last model that includes contact with a woman's organization.

Since this variable is included, 32 observations are dropped. Nonetheless, being a member of a woman's organization remains significant. Thus, in sum,

TABLE B.4.

Logistic Regression Coefficients for Voting in 1996 on Contact, Membership, Personal Characteristics, Family Characteristics, Income Levels, and Religious Affiliation

Independent variable	
Contact with a women's organization	[a]**
Member of women's organization	0.748*
	(0.296)
Personal characteristics	
Age	0.007
	(0.011)
Education	−0.003
	(0.084)
Employed	0.351
	(0.281)
Community participation	−0.001
	(0.444)
Family characteristics	
Children	0.131
	(0.076)
Living with husband	0.739**
	(0.276)
Co-wife	0.135
	(0.422)
Living in urban area	0.412
	(0.355)
Income level[b]	
Middle income	0.302
	(0.349)
High income	−0.215
	(0.355)
Religious affiliation[c]	
Christian	0.017
	(0.408)
Other	0.355
	(0.528)
Vote 1992	———
Constant	0.134
Log likelihood	−214.574
N	589

Notes: *p ≤ .05, two-tailed test; **p ≤ .01, two-tailed test. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

[a]Contact with a women's organization predicted success perfectly; thus, 32 observations were dropped from regression.

[b]Omitted category is low income.

[c]Omitted category is Muslim.

women's political behavior appears to be affected by membership within such organizations, as well as by contact with a women's organization.* Women's organizations may serve as mobilizing structures for the purpose of encouraging women to participate in the formal political process, and their success does not appear to be hindered by the presence of the 31st December Women's Movement or other organizations tied to the state.

*Similar patterns were found among members of the 31st December Women's Movement, who mobilized women to vote for the National Democratic Congress. However, these activities did not hinder women's organizations who had no ties to the state or the 31st December Women's Movement from successfully organizing women to vote.

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Notes

CHAPTER 1: RECLAIMING POWER

1. Across sub-Saharan Africa, many countries have experienced fits and starts of democratic processes. However, the recent wave of democracy has, for the most part, endured for the longest period of time.

2. One exception is Chile, when the wife of Pinochet took over the Centros de Madres. However, in this instance the membership declined, and Pinochet's wife encouraged women to promote the values of the New Chile through their roles as mothers, which backfired (Chuchryk 1989; Safa 1990).

CHAPTER 2: QUEENMOTHERS, COLONIZATION, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR LEGITIMACY

1. I acknowledge Oyewumi's (1997) argument that the idea of gender as an organizational structure may have been implemented with colonization and may thus continue to be reified through academic discourse. As seen in Chapter 1, the political systems that women were involved in prior to colonization appear, for the most part, to be complementary in terms of women and men—and not in opposition. This supports her argument. For the purposes of this book, examining women's mobilization (which is what it has now become) must be explored in relation to previous known gendered patterns. Specifically, I seek to answer the question: How has women's political mobilization as we see it today across sub-Saharan Africa come about? What factors in the past influenced current patterns?

CHAPTER 3: DEMOCRACY IN PERSPECTIVE

1. Of course, as presented in Chapter 1, scholars are now engaging the democratization process in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the literature is not as expansive as that on Eastern Europe and Latin America.

2. An exception is in Kenya, where the leader of the largest women's organization, Maendeleo Ya Wanawake, claimed in 1975 that women's place was in the home; however, this contradicted women's reality of working in agriculture, trading, and other economically productive activities (Staudt 1986).

3. Although there may be more countries that had state-run women's organizations, the countries mentioned in this book are Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Zambia.

CHAPTER 4: THE IRON FIST

1. When Rawlings staged his coup in 1981, he claimed it was a revolution. When the respondent stated that the 31st December Women's Movement was revolutionary, she was arguing that it was tied to the PNDC.

2. Please note that trokosi is only practiced among the Ewe, one of many ethnic groups in Ghana. The number of girls involved in the trokosi practice is estimated at approximately 4000.

3. From the beginning of independence, Ghanaians have attempted to avoid ethnic tensions. The two most prominent parties today—the New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress—have supporters from all ethnic groups. Although Ashantis are the primary supporters of the NPP and Ewes are the primary supporters of the NDC, there is plenty of overlap. When there are political debates, the divides are based primarily on party allegiances rather than ethnic differences. Most Ghanaians recognize the destruction that civil wars have brought upon their neighbors, and in casual conversations many will intimate that they have no intention of following suit. There have been some ethnic conflicts in Northern Ghana, however, this has never led to a full-fledged civil war, and the conflicts are generally relatively short-lived. The primary ethnic groups include the Akan (45.3% of the total population of Ghana, inclusive of the Ashanti), the Ewe (11.7% of the total population of Ghana), and the Ga-Dangme (7.8%) in southern Ghana. The predominant ethnic group in northern Ghana is the Mole-Dagbon (15.2%).

CHAPTER 5: CAPTURING DEMOCRACY

1. The change was also apparent to me as I was conducting my research. When I first started the interview process in 1997, most of the respondents were hesitant to meet with me. If I mentioned the word *politics,* they became very defensive. When I returned in 1999, the women who I spoke with were very assertive and forthcoming. The change in attitude may partly be due to the fact that the women knew who I was and recognized that I was returning to Ghana. However, some of the women I interviewed did not know me, and they still displayed confidence that I had not previously seen. Nonpartisan political topics were no longer taboo to the same degree. Many respondents spoke openly against Rawlings and his government and did not fear any repercussions. This was quite different from the responses I encountered in 1997 and the beginning of 1998.

2. The towns chosen for the surveys included Abonko, Kuntu, Obidan, Kormantse, Howadze, Abandze, Egyaa, Ewuya, and Anokye.

3. In Ghana there had been two umbrella organizations that attempted to provide some networks for women's groups. The National Council for Women and Development (NCWD) was tied to the state and was viewed as an apparatus to co-opt and control women's organizations and their activities. The Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations in Development (GAPVOD) was also co-opted by the state. GAPVOD was formed in the early 1980s by a number of different non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to allow for networking possibilities. However, in the mid-1980s, GAPVOD began to receive significant funding from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), since the UNDP was working together with the PNDC government to stimulate the economy (Oquaye 1996). Eventually, the activities of GAPVOD came under the control of the UNDP, and the NGOs that had formed the organization ceded control (Oquaye 1996). Because of this history, members of autonomous women's organizations remained wary of GAPVOD.

CHAPTER 6: BIG MEN, SMALL GIRLS, AND THE POLITICS OF POWER

1. This representative is no longer working at the ministry.

2. For this chapter, I rely on interviews with members or leaders from the following organizations: ABANTU for Development, the Domestic Violence Coalition, NetRight, the Gender Centre, WISE, the Ministry for Women's and Children's Affairs.

3. My respondents indicated that most of their organizations did not approve of the creation of the Ministry for Women's and Children's Affairs. However, some thought it was a step in the right direction. Thus, while some disapproved, some were in support of it.

4. This respondent is now the former head of the DV Coalition. She stepped down in 2005.

5. A simple search on-line of national Ghanaian newspapers, including the *Daily Graphic, Public Agenda,* and the *Chronicle,* as well as of Allafrica.com, reveals that mention of the marital rape clause in the media begins during this time period.

6. Although numerous members argued that this was the reason the new head of the DV Coalition was voted in, many also acknowledged that the new leader did not agree with this rhetoric. He took on the position because he was passionate about the topic and was highly qualified.

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